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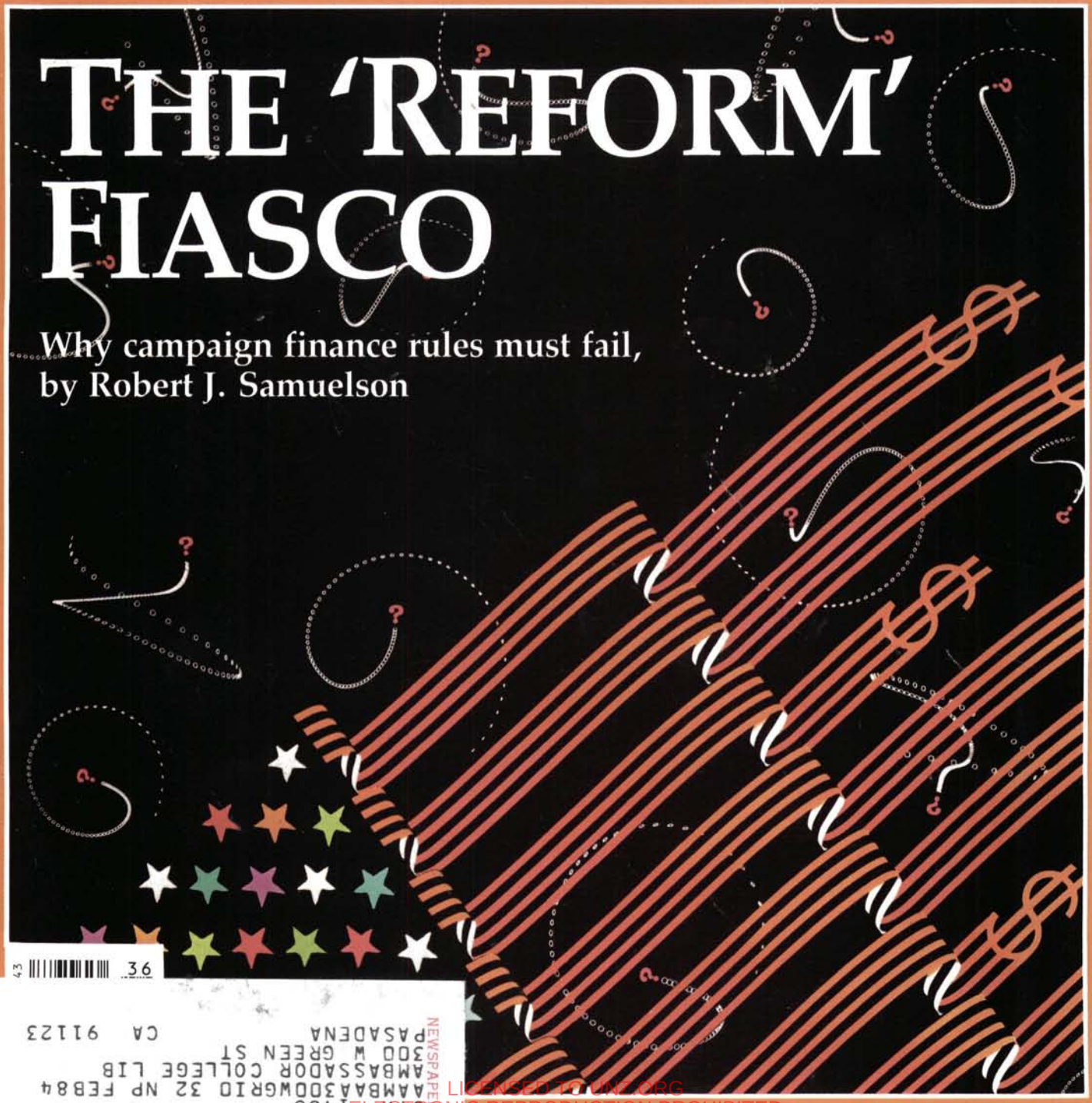
THE NEW REPUBLIC



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"It's life as usual in the big wildlife reserve nearby," says Orval Fouse, Supervisor, Utilities & Environmental Engineering at Gulf's Port Arthur, Texas, refinery. "The snow geese still spend a few months here each year during migration. The marshes around the refinery are still full of raccoons, otters, minks, muskrats, even some deer and bobcats.

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"Can oil and wildlife mix? They do at Gulf's Port Arthur refinery."

Snow Goose (C. Caerulescens), photographed near Gulf's Port Arthur refinery by Dr. John Tveten.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,581

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE AIDS DILEMMA

To the editors:

I take strenuous exception to Charles Krauthammer's equating the gay lifestyle with the "bathhouse culture." ("The Politics of a Plague," TNR, August 1). All available evidence suggests that only a fraction of gay men make any use of the bathhouses, much less regard them as a central feature of what it means to be gay. Mr. Krauthammer's statements suggest—or, at any rate, permit the inference—that the whole gay movement has been about the freedom to have more sex. I would suggest that the movement is not even mainly about being able to have sex more freely.

Mr. Krauthammer makes a related mistake when he quotes Richard Goldstein's article in the *The Village Voice* about the AIDS-generated "devastating task" of choosing between health and desire, and then says rather patronizingly that before Freud this would have been considered a "commonplace task." Here Mr. Krauthammer misrepresents the nature of the problem, and, worse, trivializes it. Mr. Krauthammer forgets that homosexuals came into being as a social group (see Foucault, Hocquenghem, and the sociologists of sexuality) by virtue of their sexuality, and of a single aspect of it at that—the gender of their partner. Thus, the centrality of sexuality which is the common lot of human beings is even more central to gay people, who as a result of society's constricting definition tend to look to sexuality as a way of confirming their existence. Sociologically and psychologically, a preoccupation with being gay is not unlike the preoccupation of prewar Eastern European Jews with being Jewish—where, for example, a lullaby says, "*Shlof, Yideleh, Shlof,*" which translates literally not as "Sleep, Baby, Sleep," but as "Sleep, little Jew, Sleep." The particular ways in which such preoccupations express themselves in behavior are often less important than the causes, meanings, and functions of the preoccupation itself. For gay people the "commonplace task" of reconciling health and "desire" is not simply a behavioral struggle to maximize *pleasure*, it is a profound psychological and political struggle about being a whole person in the world.

In this context, closing the bathhouses is a more difficult question than Mr. Krauthammer acknowledges or deals with. Does he think the behavior that occurs in these locations will simply disappear? The era of Prohibition forced people to be creative in their pursuit of alcohol; similar creative energies have developed a whole world of sexual locales.

As an openly gay male psychotherapist who has worked in professional mental health organizations, gay groups, and gay-oriented health care delivery systems for some years, I object to Mr. Krauthammer's fundamental misrepresentation of the purpose of the gay movement, mostly by what he leaves out. The movement is against people being accorded second-class citizenship because of the gender of their partners.

When Mr. Krauthammer says that "In reality, no one knows whether AIDS is accidentally a homosexual disease or intrinsically so," what on earth does he mean? What would an "intrinsic" disease be? Are diabetes or Tay-Sachs intrinsically Jewish diseases? Is sickle-cell anemia intrinsically a black disease? To say that no one knows is to display the pseudo-naiveté that too often marks the liberal form of lack of understanding of the gay situation, and which subtly pervades Mr. Krauthammer's article. I would recommend that he undertake some more extensive interviewing of gay leaders and reading of the gay literature as preparation to writing on this complex, sensitive, and difficult topic.

JOEL D. HENCKEN
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Your articles on AIDS were refreshingly discerning; they struck a welcome balance between the frenzied accusations of the gay press and the malignancy of "religious fundamentalists" ("The Politics of a Plague"; and "The History of an Epidemic," by Robert Bazell, TNR, August 1). But I was startled by the implication in both articles that the promiscuous world of bars and bathhouses were something that the gay community worked hard to create and, more importantly, something it *desired*. At the close of his article, Charles Krauthammer refers to the bathhouses as one of the gay movement's "most extreme social gains." This is a blatant misconception.

The hypersexualized, predatory world of bars and bathhouses is a desperate alternative gay men have been driven to—not something they have joyfully achieved. The sexual revolution of the '60s held a great deal of promise for gays in America, but most emerged from that naive decade with acute feelings of betrayal and alienation. Without political or social legitimacy, sexual self-definition became the touchstone for gay militancy. Today it is yet another symbol of oppression. Love, intimacy, tenderness, and fidelity between gay men is incomprehensible to the mainstream, but the dehumanized, oversexed world of a gay bar is comforting and acceptable—especially to the homophobe. Gays have inadvertently confirmed the prejudices and stereotypes they so wished to smash. Gay bars and bathhouses are the pathetic byproducts of a viciously intolerant society.

Until now, gays have been able to balance the frenetic, lonely life of the gay subculture with discreet, small-scale moves toward liberation; but the tragedy of AIDS flies in the face of this meager progress. The prospects are bleak indeed—for the more alienated our affections become, the more desperate our lives shall be.

DAVID DENICOLO
Williamstown, Massachusetts

SENATE SLUSH

To the editors:

I noted with keen and very wry interest your article, "The Senate's Secret Slush Funds" (TNR, June 20). I also noted I am credited (or debited!) with having expended $200 on a Dale Carnegie course. Some have had good old high jocular fun with that one—but do let me express for the record that the person who attended the course is a member of my Wyoming staff—an individual who is often required to present my views to various groups and organizations when my schedule will not allow me to be personally present. And the employee did pay one half of the course enrollment cost.

ALAN K. SIMPSON
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

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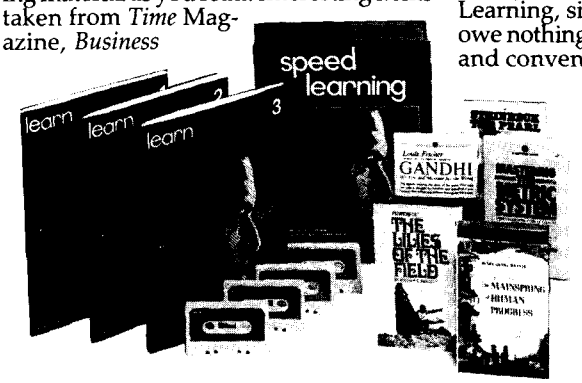

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FROM WASHINGTON

SUMMER READING

In this city you believe what you want to believe, and sometimes, particularly if it's your job, you believe what you want others to believe. Anyway, it's summer—the dog days—and new stories are met with some skepticism. Better to stick to the familiar flat-out dog-days stories, of which there were two this season. The first—a perennial—explained that the phrase "dog days" doesn't come from the news about dogs that fills the papers this season (or the jokes: "How do you keep a dog from going mad in August?" "Shoot him in July."), but from the juxtaposition of the sun and Sirius, the dog star.

That led to a marvelous straight-faced front-page story that scientists (or "savants," as the tabloids call them) may have found a new solar system surrounding the distant star Vega, and some predicted (or "averred"—savants always "aver") that this might lead to the discovery of other forms of life, perhaps even "as we know it." A classic summer story.

But even here on this isolated planet (summer or winter, it is a truth that any politician who uses the word "planet" in referring to the world is heavily into pomposity) there have been two foreign policy stories with elements of the dog days. In Chad, a seemingly permanent civil war has heated up, this time with the added excitement of an alleged intervention by Libya.

That "alleged" is worth some comment. From the beginning, before anyone knew exactly what was happening in Chad, the American press and television described the war as an invasion by Libya. Libyan tanks and planes, we were told, along with Libyan forces, "are in Chad and bombing towns on the way to the capital." Colonel Qaddafi, meanwhile, continues to insist that there's no Libyan military involvement at all.

Now, the Colonel does not have a high reputation for probity in these matters. So it is worth noting that the Chadian government, on the first day of the conflict, produced a captured Libyan pilot, who described his mission in rather inflammatory terms, and then bundled him off in a truck. He has not been seen or heard from since, but for many days he remained the only evidence anyone had offered in support of the theory that this was a Libyan adventure. The best argument in favor of the Colonel, in fact, came on the seventh day of the conflict, when the French foreign minister—who should know—said in a speech that it was "clear beyond doubt" that Libyan forces were heavily involved, and cited as his evidence the same pilot who had made his appearance days before. No tanks, no rifles, no prisoners.

In Guatemala, there is an equally interesting story, also based on one soldier, captured not in person but on film. During the coup in that country early this month, alert television watchers were surprised to see, at the Presidential Palace during the coup itself, an American military attaché, Major William Ricardo, carrying and using a walkie-talkie, and also trying to duck out of the line of the cameras.

When one combines this with the fact that the new chief of state, General Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores, had visited with U.S. commanders on board the aircraft carrier *Ranger* off Nicaragua the day before the coup, there was some speculation—for those who wanted to speculate—that maybe, just maybe, the United States had a hand in the coup that toppled General Efrain Ríos Montt, the only born-again Protestant ever to hold power in Central America, and brought to power General Mejía, who promptly and emphatically denounced General Montt's aloofness from the United States but vowed to continue military action in the countryside.

But the State Department was able to match Colonel Qaddafi's standard of denial. Yes, said a spokesman, the dep-

continued on page 39

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
SEPTEMBER 5, 1983

TABLING HUNGER

The Reagan Administration seems to think the poor hunger for public relations but not for food. How else to explain the Administration's recent two-front media blitz? There was more nourishment in it for the high-minded than for the empty-bellied. First the secretary of agriculture, John Block, went shopping. He and his wife Sue took a trip to the neighborhood grocery store to buy a week's rations on a food stamp budget of $58 for a family of four. "I'm here to demonstrate that you can live within the plan and have a satisfactory diet," Mr. Block informed an audience of dozens of cameramen and reporters. Then the President established the Task Force on Food Assistance, an effort to find out why the federal government's slimmed-down food programs have not put an end to television reports about Americans going hungry. "I am deeply concerned by these stories, because I know the suffering that each of these incidents represents," the President declared. "At the same time, I admit to being perplexed by these accounts."

Mr. Reagan has now resorted to many commissions to help him with his perplexity problem. But cynics may be pardoned for pointing out that his interest in the hungry has been slow in coming, and for suggesting that he is concerned more with politics than with poverty. (After all, last autumn's worry about the unemployed has evaporated. Unemployment is "not a problem," a senior White House aide recently told *The Washington Post*. "We're not talking about it, we're not meeting on it.") The White House dispatched Robert Carleson of the Office of Policy Development to explain the rationale behind the task force. He said the President believes that "there shouldn't be hunger, at least hunger unnecessarily, of the people who would want otherwise to be fed." The nation will surely be glad to learn that Mr. Reagan opposes hunger, and that he opposes spending precious tax dollars on the many hungry people who don't want to be fed.

All the same, the President seems reluctant to read his own budget. The task force might begin by drawing the Administration's attention to the correlation between the billions of dollars in cuts from government food programs and the exacerbation of the hunger problem. Child nutrition programs have been slashed by $1.5 billion. Food stamps have been slashed by $1.7 billion. Recent census numbers show that the percentage of citizens living below the poverty line is the highest it has been since 1965—15 percent in all. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the tax and benefit changes so dear to the Administration will result this year in a net loss of $310 for the average family earning less than $10,000 a year. Since 1981, the Department of Agriculture reports, the Administration has managed to "terminate" eight hundred thousand people from the food stamp program and three million children from the school lunch program.

But the Administration is not yet satisfied. Its 1984 budget proposals would drop six hundred thousand low-income pregnant women, infants, and children from one program; cut an additional $300 million from federal child nutrition programs; and reduce the food stamp benefits of one million elderly and disabled households by an average of $250. The poorest of the poor have remained where they were when Mr. Reagan first took office: on the verge of

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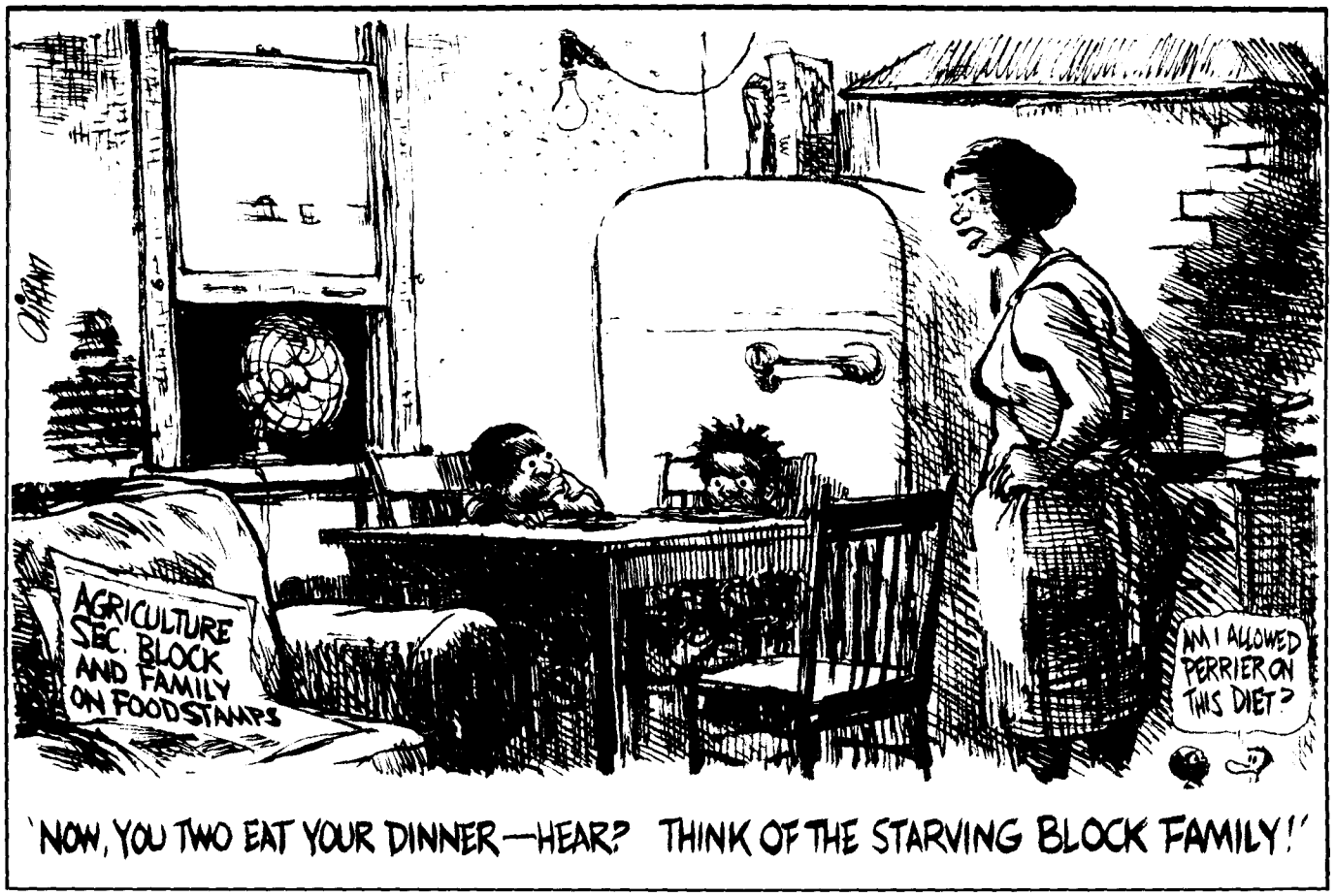
AGRICULTURE SEC. BLOCK AND FAMILY ON FOODSTAMPS
AM I ALLOWED PERRIER ON THIS DIET?
'NOW, YOU TWO EAT YOUR DINNER—HEAR? THINK OF THE STARVING BLOCK FAMILY!'

CARTOON BY PAT OLIPHANT (UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE)

starvation. The Administration's special contribution to the hunger problem has been to make it more difficult for many—such as large families supported by a single low wage—to stay above the margin of poverty. The number of children below the poverty line increased last year by 10 percent, no doubt swelling the legions of the permanent underclass.

We sympathize deeply with the plight of the hungry. We have no sympathy with the Administration's political troubles on the issue. Ever since assuming office, the President and his cabinet have taken a callous approach to federal food programs. In one particularly revealing anecdote, Mr. Reagan claimed that food stamp recipients buy vodka with their spare change. If Mr. Block could be persuaded to stay on his food stamp regimen for a year, it would be interesting to see just how much change he had left over at the end of each month. Another good example of the Administration's cavalier attitude toward the poor came earlier this summer, when Mr. Block acquired the distinction of being the first secretary of agriculture in history to order the states to prepare for reductions in benefits. While the Administration played politics with the $1.2 billion in supplemental funds needed to keep the food stamp program solvent through this fiscal year, America's twenty-two million food stamp recipients faced the prospect of further cutbacks. Mr. Reagan eventually signed the supplemental appropriations bill as his undeclared reelection campaign moved into gear. But those who rely on food stamps can take only small comfort from the passage of the bill and the establishment of the task force.

The agriculture secretary explained the purpose of his week-long diet by saying, "I don't expect people to do anything I wouldn't do." But his shopping excursion had an ulterior motive as well. Mr. Block wants to squeeze out another billion dollars by raising the food stamp "offset." If he gets his way, recipients would have their allotments reduced by 35 percent, rather than 30 percent of the amount by which their weekly cash income exceeds $20. A family of four living on $100 a week, for example, currently receives $34 (not the $58 that the Blocks spent on their trip to the grocery store). Under Mr. Block's proposed "reform," the same family would receive only $30 in food stamps.

Do the President and his agriculture secretary really need a task force of experts to tell them why one dollar per person per day in food stamps leaves people with pits in their stomachs? Perhaps the Administration does not understand the effects of its own policies. A less charitable interpretation is that Mr. Reagan allows convenience to dictate his attitude toward hunger. The recent completion of a long-term grain pact with the Soviet Union—in response to pressure from farmers—shows that the Administration has shed its inhibitions about feeding Russians. But Mr. Reagan's record in feeding Americans seems stubbornly resistant to change.

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NOTEBOOK

□ THE REPUBLICANS have issued a press release to papers in the congressional district of Representative Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee with the headline: GORE VOTES TO LOAN MONEY TO COMMUNIST NATIONS. The release quotes the egregious Representative Phil Gramm of Texas as saying, "In this vote, we had a clean choice: prevent the hard-earned money of the working people of this country from going to Communist dictatorships, or support Communism. Obviously Albert Gore chose to support Communism rather than the people of this country." What Mr. Gore actually did, as the press release did not say, was to vote against an amendment to the International Monetary Fund legislation—an amendment which was also opposed by the Reagan Administration, the House Republican leader, and the ranking Republicans on the three committees concerned with the I.M.F. This all reminded Anthony Lewis in *The New York Times* of McCarthyism: "the crude smear on the patriotism of opponents, the perversion of facts, the indifference to consequences . . . it is gangster politics" perpetrated by "the gangster right." Mr. Lewis is correct. But Mr. Gore has been the target of attacks from different quarters recently. The syndicated columnist Mary McGrory has written a batch of columns criticizing him and his colleague Les Aspin of Wisconsin for their support of the Scowcroft report on the MX. But, like the Republican press release, hers are not the civil criticisms of a civil politics. It's not just that she thinks Mr. Gore and Mr. Aspin are wrong; they are "cowards," "apostles of the politics of fear," "Judas-goats" (which the dictionary defines as animals who lead others to slaughter). We find the animal metaphor when applied to people—a staple of extremist politics—demeaning: it dehumanizes. And the allusion to Judas is, after all, an allusion to the man who betrayed Jesus Christ. So we are back to gangster politics—though not, this time, of the right.

□ NEW REPUBLIC BOOKS/HOLT, RINEHART & WINSTON is pleased to announce the publication of *Red Carpet*, by Joseph Finder, an examination of the "business" side of United States-Soviet relations—the idiosyncratic form of capitalism pursued by people like Armand Hammer, Donald Kendall, Averell Harriman, the late Cyrus Eaton, and David Rockefeller with Soviet premiers and commissars.

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The ease with which the navy has sold its new building program to the American people affords another example of the state of public confusion which invariably surrounds questions of national defense. As a result of the naval program the American taxpaper is now faced with the certain prospect of a national-defense budget which in the course of the next few years will run up to nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars." ("Preparedness for What?" by William T. Stone, September 6, 1933.)

A docudrama starring Ronald Reagan.

B MOVIE

THE HISTORICAL drama unfolding on the screen had all the subtlety of an old B movie. There was Kate Smith singing "God Bless America"; John Wayne accepting an academy award; B-29s, their propellers abuzz, preparing to take off to defend the flag; undulating fields of wheat accompanied by patriotic anthems. Then, at a pivotal moment, came a sellout: a U.S. President warmly embracing an enemy leader, kissing him on both cheeks. The film became almost biblical—the kiss as a betrayal of everything American and Republican.

Jimmy Carter is the one who gives Leonid Brezhnev that peck on the cheek, and it's not hard to guess who steps forward to rescue us from such depravity. *Ronald Reagan's America* features Reagan in his first starring role since *The Killers*, in which he played a shifty bad guy. This time he plays a good guy; it's the movie that's shifty. It is the work of a California public relations firm, and the inspiration of the National Conservative Political Action Committee. As a prelude to Reagan's near-certain candidacy, NCPAC is paying local television stations to show this twenty-four-minute film (plus commercial breaks). Each broadcast will cost NCPAC up to $10,000; current plans call for it to be aired on fifty stations by 1984.

The film opens with Ronald Reagan's 1982 State of the Union address, in which, standing before a massive American flag, the President talks about "the countless quiet everyday heroes of American life." In the next scene, as images of cirrus clouds, the ocean, and the Lincoln Memorial flit across the screen, a disembodied voice challenges the notion that we live in an age bereft of heroes. A montage of John Wayne movie stills comes next, as Reagan's voice returns, telling us that Wayne would have been angry at being called "the last American hero." Much later in the film, in another clip from the 1982 State of the Union performance, Reagan gestures sweepingly toward Lenny Skutnick as the House and Senate applaud. The narrator intones, "Are we still American heroes, strong enough to save America—determined enough to reelect Ronald Reagan?" But you get the message. *Ronald Reagan's America* is a movie about today's American heroes, and one in particular: the President of the United States.

The film sets out to prove its inspirational point with a Presidential biography that maps out Reagan's major personal triumphs. A shot of a sign saying WELCOME TO DIXON, ILLINOIS, dissolves into a shot of the same sign three-quarters of a century ago, taking us back to the time of Reagan's boyhood, instantly uniting the present with the trouble-free past, a cinematic rebuttal of Thomas Wolfe's belief that you can't go home again. From there we get a recap of the major early events in Reagan's life, from his traditional boyhood to his early days in Hollywood, where we discover that he was one of Warner Brothers'

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most promising stars, second only to Errol Flynn. Reagan is successful at what he does, be it acting as a lifeguard, a sports announcer, a matinee idol, or, as in this film, a smooth self-promoter. It feels good to watch a hero succeed, and if people are dissatisfied with their lot, the dreams this film represents are lulling.

Propaganda, whether in the form of a feature-length classic like Leni Riefenstalhl's *Triumph of the Will* or a thirty-second Pepsi commercial urging you to "catch the spirit" and become young and trendy, attempts to convince through emotionally loaded images rather than through rational argument. *Ronald Reagan's America* is closer to Pepsi than to Leni, but it has its artful moments. For instance, in the depiction of the assassination attempt, the narrator tells us that "a madman's bullet does what the President's critics cannot do"—implying that given their deepest desires, Reagan's opponents would gun him down too. But it is when the artifice fails that the unspoken (and unintended) message shines through most clearly. One scene shows Reagan, stumping for Barry Goldwater for President in 1964, delivering an apocalyptic message about the choice between preserving "this, the last best hope for man on earth" for future generations or consigning them to "a thousand years of darkness." This sentiment is followed immediately by footage of Governor Reagan directing helmeted riot police to collar antiwar demonstrators, consigning at least these members of the younger generation to tear gas and thirty days of darkness in a jail cell.

Dramatic tension rises as the narrative approaches Reagan's election. Jimmy Carter and the Democrats threaten to send America spinning, as the narrator puts it somberly, into "an ominous decline. . . . Night after night, we watch fellow Americans held up at gunpoint, while our leaders do nothing—too weak to act." (Commercial break, to heighten suspense.) When Reagan goes after Carter and other enemies, the pace of the editing quickens. The montage accelerates to a rapid-fire series of cuts—murder through technique, not unlike the effect Alfred Hitchcock sought in the famous shower scene of *Psycho*. Janet Leigh was dispatched with a large kitchen knife; here the victims are Carter, Walter Mondale, Jane Fonda, Tip O'Neill, Ralph Nader, and Bill Moyers, and the weapons are their own words, turned upon them by the sarcastic shouting of voices off camera: "He's too old!" "He's a mean man!" "He took a vacation!"

It is the footage taken from the 1980 debate, however, that is the most accomplished part of the film. Here Reagan is his consummate media self—relaxed and confident (almost as if he knew just what his opponent would say), while Carter is stiff, looking as if he could shatter if someone hit a high note. The intercutting is fast and furious. Carter (squinting): "Governor Reagan typically is against such a proposal." Reagan (leaning over, smiling): "There you go again." Carter (eyes brightening): "I had a discussion with my daughter Amy the other day before I came here to ask her what the most important issue was. She said nuclear weaponry." Reagan (inclining forward, earnestly): "Are you better off than you were four years ago?"

Reagan plays from strength. He is a seamless President, not plagued by the self-doubts that afflicted Carter. Carter's attempts at image-making—his chair near the fireplace, his daughter Amy, his cardigans, his phone-a-thons—rapidly developed into clichés which only made him look silly or pathetic. Reagan exploits images that are already clíches, but in which he deeply believes. In the process he has given them new life and legitimacy.

How real is *Ronald Reagan's America*? Not very, but it's real to Ronald Reagan. In the film, as in Reagan's life, the traditions of American conservatism become virtually indistinguishable from the traditions of Hollywood in its heyday. The picture closes with Reagan intoning, "We did protect and pass on lovingly"—pause—"that shining city on a hill." There is, however, one aspect of Ronald Reagan's heroism that the film neglects. "A truism of many writers," Reagan once told a *Washington Post* reporter, "is that in motion pictures I was the fellow who never got the girl. Well, I always got the girl." Recently, in a televised tribute to Ian Fleming's most famous creation, Reagan extolled Agent 007 as "fearless, skilled, courageous, and optimistic. And one other thing," he concluded emphatically, "he always gets his girl."

The name is Bond. President Bond.

JOHN MCQUAID

A Eurosocialist to the rescue.

CRAXI'S MOXIE

BETTINO CRAXI, the first Socialist prime minister in the history of Italy, is an unlikely candidate for such an imposing role. Bespectacled, sartorially informal (the Roman press notes the rare days on which he wears a tie), intermittently overweight, personally reserved, Craxi appears to be more professorial than political. The appearance is misleading in all respects. In the past ten years Craxi has demonstrated unusual qualities of leadership and political acumen, transforming the Italian Socialist Party (P.S.I.) from a satellite of the larger Communist Party to an independent political force, and now parlaying a modest 11 percent of the popular vote into the prime ministership. In the course of this remarkable political ascent, Craxi has successfully defeated the left wing of his own party, the Communist leaders (who hate Craxi more than they hate any other Italian politician), and the current secretary of the Christian Democratic Party, who had based his own political strategy on an attempt to weaken the Socialists.

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It used to be said about the Italian Socialists that they did not know what they wanted, and they wanted it immediately. Happily, that has changed. Like his Socialist colleagues at the head of the Spanish and Portuguese governments, Craxi is a pragmatist. Like them, he will preside over an austerity government that must drastically reduce government spending, and will "privatize" sectors of the economy that had been nationalized (as in Portugal) or were never private in the first place (as in Spain). It won't be easy, because Italy's problems—above all the public sector deficit and the corruption of the political class—are greater than those in other Latin countries. But it had seemed impossible for Craxi to achieve what he has already in fact accomplished, and he may somehow force the country's politicians to come to grips with the problems they have so diligently ignored for the past fifteen years.

IF THERE IS ANY area where Craxi lacks demonstrated talent, it is in foreign affairs. Craxi has never visited either the United States or the Soviet Union, and in recent years his travels have been generally limited to meetings of the Socialist International and to the Middle East (he has visited both Israel and the Arab countries), and there was a trip to China. Yet for all his lack of experience, he has shown a good instinct for crucial issues, and a rare capacity for both discretion and courage. Italy's decision to keep American cruise missiles would have been impossible without his firm assent, and at one point in 1981 he played a quiet and honorable role in probing the possibilities for a peaceful resolution of the Salvadoran guerrilla war.

A strong supporter of NATO, Craxi nonetheless will add his voice to that of many Europeans who are seeking some sort of role for the old continent in international affairs. Like Felipe González in Spain, Craxi's sympathies run with the liberation movements in dictatorial Third World countries, and he will be difficult for the Reagan Administration to enlist on behalf of its policies in Central America (even though he holds no brief for the Sandinistas) and in Southern Africa (even though he does not approve of the Cuban colonial presence in Angola and Ethiopia).

The selection of Craxi as Italy's prime minister completes the transition of Latin Europe from artereosclerotic conservatism to democratic socialism—or "Eurosocialism"—of a particularly realistic sort. Mário Soares, González, and Craxi reject communism out of hand. They do not believe in command economies, they feel that mass nationalizations are destructive of productive capacities, and they are attempting to introduce greater discipline into economic and social policies. In the curious world we now live in, these three men of the left are attempting to remedy the effects of runaway social spending programs carried out by previous governments of the right (or center-right). And in foreign policy, these Eurosocialists are more consistently and coherently concerned about Soviet actions than were their predecessors. These three men have all had to fight against communism in their own countries, and their success marks the reemergence of a vigorous left-wing anticommunism. Our own men of the left could do worse than to reflect on the Eurosocialists' triumph.

The Eurosocialists are young men, impatient with traditional methods and ideologies, and eager to tackle problems (Craxi showed these characteristics in his initial presentation to Parliament, which he kept to under an hour, instead of the usual two; he sent forward a detailed program in writing). They are not about to repeat the disastrous example of François Mitterrand, who unaccountably attempted to apply doctrinaire socialist methods to his nation's economy and now finds himself turning toward austerity economics in an attempt to cut his political and economic losses. Soares, González, and Craxi will tinker, impose discipline, and experiment, but they will not try radical techniques. Instead of sacred texts, the Eurosocialists draw upon the advice of experts from all over the West.

Finally, they are young men, who bring with them the passion and vigor of youth. Some years ago, the authoritative *Corriere della Sera* of Milan lamented that the Italian ruling class no longer produced sex scandals, while countries from France to England and the United States seemed full of them. For a country whose men thought of themselves as "Latin lovers," this was intolerable, and the editorialist for the *Corriere* called upon Italian politicians to remedy the situation. To date, this advice has not been followed, but now there is hope. If the Italian newspapers are to be believed, in Bettino Craxi Italy may have acquired not only its first Socialist prime minister, but a sexy leader as well.

MICHAEL LEDEEN

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The crazed colonel on the move in Chad.

QADDAFI'S WAR

Tunis

COLONEL MUAMMAR QADDAFI is on the move again in Africa. This time his chosen battleground is Chad, a desert country of 4.5 million people scattered through a territory twice the size of France. The confusion and hesitation evident in French and American reactions to Qaddafi's newest adventure are more understandable if viewed in terms of the three complex fronts on which Qaddafi conducts this war.

His intent is not simply to depose one Chadian tribal leader, Hisséne Habré, a former "rebel" who now en-

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joys Western blessing, and reinstate another, Goukouni Oueddei, now a rebel, formerly the "legitimate" president in the eyes of many Africans, and of the United States and France as well. Qaddafi is fighting against what he considers "reactionary" and "neo-colonial" regimes and relationships in both Arab and black Africa; against French influence; and against American pressure, represented by the Reagan Administration's troop, air, and naval movements in the Mediterranean, Sudan, and Egypt. Close neighbors of Qaddafi like Algeria, whose government quietly detests his unpredictability, and Tunisia, which recently resigned itself to Qaddafi's first visit since March 1982, fear that Qaddafi's third battlefront—the one against the United States—could sharpen superpower tensions both north and south of the Sahara.

IN military terms, Qaddafi's Soviet arms and his eighteen hundred or so Soviet military instructors, as well as his East German security personnel, are less of a concern to NATO's southern headquarters in Naples than are the air bases which the Soviets have built for Qaddafi in Libya, and which they use themselves. Another worry is Libya's increasingly mobile navy. Fast Soviet-made missile boats and the SX-404 submarines Qaddafi has bought from Italy, especially designed for covert delivery of frogmen and underwater explosives, are useful against anchored ships, port installations, and oil-drilling platforms or pipelines.

On his Afro-Arab front, Qaddafi's Chad campaign is a reaction to his having been snubbed by the Organization of African Unity last year (the result of a dispute about accrediting the Polisario guerrillas), which deprived him of his chance to take his normal turn as O.A.U. chairman. But Qaddafi hesitated several months before finally attacking in Chad. Senior Libyan army officers were reluctant to repeat their costly 1980-81 invasion of Chad (begun, and ended, at Goukouni's request) or the disastrous Libyan military expedition to Uganda in 1979, when Qaddafi attempted to prop up Idi Amin, the former dictator, against the invading Tanzanian army. Also, Qaddafi delayed the Chad expedition while he made fence-mending trips last June to North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and his ally Syria, and even a surprise visit to King Hassan of Morocco, a sworn enemy. And there are indications that he was carefully watching a Tunisian initiative to revive the old "greater Maghrev" idea of an economic federation of Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and perhaps Libya, to see if it could be turned to his advantage.

Related to these aims, and linked to Chad, was a secret Qaddafi effort to end—on Libyan terms—the Western Sahara war between Morocco and the Polisario guerrillas. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, once again on speaking terms with Qaddafi, apparently told him that Saudi Arabia was anxious to cut down its massive payments to Morocco for prosecution of the Western Saharan war. If Libya would reduce its arms and cash supplies to the guerrillas, Saudi Arabia and Morocco would look the other way when the Qaddafi-Goukouni team made its move in Chad. Egypt and Sudan, despite their long history of conflict with Qaddafi, were relatively discreet. President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt declared in no uncertain terms that the joint U.S.-Egyptian "Bright Star" military maneuvers now underway could not be directed against Libya. Sudan did accept the two U.S. AWACS planes sent there to watch Libyan air movements, but their use depends on more effective U.S. electronic communication links with French "instructor" forces in Chad than have been established at this writing.

However, Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Soko, lately a guest of President Reagan and President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the prosperous but wary Ivory Coast, were quick to condemn the Qaddafi adventure in Chad. Mobutu, who faces a little-noticed but quite serious insurgency at home in Saba Province, and who has some Israeli military advisers, was the first to send troops to support President Habré. He would not have done so had the United States and the Saudi-led Arab conservatives been willing to drop Habré. This move showed that the suggested Qaddafi-Fahd accord had already broken down.

Another cause for delay was Qaddafi's continued meddling in the Middle East. In Beirut on June 5 a man suspected of being a Libyan agent tried to kill the Libyan chargé d'affaires for Jordan, apparently to prevent the diplomat from disclosing details of Qaddafi's support of the anti-Arafat P.L.O. dissidents in Lebanon. Libya's ambassador to Jordan, Azziz Omar Al-Shuneh, then defected, charging that Qaddafi was planning to murder both Arafat and King Hussein of Jordan. Shuneh also supported suspect claims that the missing charismatic leader of Lebanon's Shiite Moslems, Musa Sadr, was killed by Qaddafi's security men in Libya in 1978. Sadr's disappearance in Libya is the main reason why Qaddafi's constant efforts to move closer to the Ayatollah Khomeini have met with less than spectacular success.

THUS ISOLATED in the Arab arena, Qaddafi launched his calculated challenge to François Mitterrand's support for Habré, support based on a 1976 French-Chadian pact that does not provide for the same degree of military assistance France offers to potential "domino" neighbors of Chad, such as Niger (which produces uranium which is vital to the French nuclear program, and which Qaddafi also buys for his nuclear power and his clandestine weapons research), Cameroon, Senegal, and the Central African Republic. Qaddafi's calculation that France would not go beyond sending in supplies and a few hundred paratroop "trainers" was founded on France's thirst for Libyan oil. In 1982 Libya was France's fourth largest oil supplier, with 4.2 million tons, 54 percent more than in 1982.

Both French and U.S. analysts figured that neither France's Jaguar fighter-bombers, on standby in neighboring states, nor the U.S. carrier *Eisenhower*'s F-14s would be needed, provided Qaddafi stopped after capturing Faya-Largeau, the big oasis guarding approaches to both the capital at Ndjamena and to the newly established

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French base near the Sudanese border, Abéché. Qaddafi has been trying to remedy his most serious logistical problem since before he allegedly attempted to use Billy Carter in 1978 to release C-130 transport planes on order but being held in Georgia. The transport planes were important in moving troops and equipment farther south. The Reagan Administration successfully foiled Qaddafi's efforts to buy Australian-owned C-130A Hercules transports. Qaddafi still has seven C-130H Hercules transports flown mainly by British and other European mercenary pilots, some of whom are old friends of Edwin Wilson, the convicted ex-C.I.A. Qaddafi supplier. These planes are supplemented by six Soviet-supplied Ilyushin 76 freighters and two Lockheed Jetstar executive jets, as well as some Italian G-222 transports. Qaddafi is currently trying to buy Brazil's Xingu trainer-attack planes, and the United States is doing all it can to block the deal.

The Reagan Administration's visceral dislike of Qaddafi is due partly to irritation over the kid-gloves approach of past Administrations and partly to his extension of aid to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, as well as to such operations as the large-scale Libyan effort to smuggle arms to Colombian guerrillas, foiled in Brazil last April when three Libyan planeloads of arms were forced down. The 1981 "hit team" saga—which led the Reagan Administration, initially on the unreliable word of a Lebanese informant seeking a C.I.A. pension and a C.I.A.-provided house in McLean, Virginia, to fear attacks on the President and other senior U.S. officials—still rankles in Washington, where memories are often short.

However, Chad seems unlikely to be the arena where the United States confronts its North African tormentor, and finally bashes him. Chad is more likely to force upon President Mitterrand the unpalatable choice of a deal with Qaddafi (thus avoiding losing Libyan oil and Libyan arms purchases in France) or seeming to accede to American wishes to get tougher with him. Qaddafi has lately acquired one new friend in Francophone Africa, the leader of the successful coup in Upper Volta, Captain Thomas Sankara, whose "revolution" takes its place alongside that of another Qaddafi friend, Ghana's Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, both of whom are more of a psychological than a real threat to their conservative anti-Qaddafi neighbors. These neighbors, for the moment, are hoping that Qaddafi's whirlwind will blow itself out against the rocky escarpments of northern Chad's Tibesti Mountains, and not invade the fertile African plains and savannahs to the south.

JOHN COOLEY

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What the students taught the teacher about just and unjust wars.

NOTES FROM AN ISRAEL JOURNAL

BY MICHAEL WALZER

Jerusalem

IN THE city-states of ancient Greece, democratic politics had a special meaning. It was the process—vital, tumultuous, dangerous, deeply engaging—through which the citizens determined their collective fate. The internal shape of their city and its survival or destruction in the world outside hung immediately on their decisions. Political life must have had an urgency that we can hardly understand. For us, politics is a spectator sport, a game of celebrities, so much like other entertainments that we mix the participants. I don't mean that important issues are not decided through the political process, even issues like health care, Social Security, industrial safety, that come close to being matters of life or death. But these are matters of life or death only for individuals or groups of individuals here and there. We have no sense that our collective fate hangs in the political balance. The antinuclear movement struggles to create such a sense, mostly without success. Americans feel safe, or at least we feel that we have such a margin of safety that we could make (as we do make) a great many mistakes and still save ourselves in the end. The cavalry will always ride over the hill before the wagon train is overrun. Here in Israel, no one expects the cavalry to ride at all. There are only the people in the wagon train; they have to decide what to do, and their fate depends on their own decisions.

Politics has a Greek immediacy here. I am always surprised and braced by it: the intensity of political discussion, even among friends; the fierceness of public debate;

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the absolute inescapability of politics (every Israeli knows the truth of Trotsky's line: you may not care about the dialectic, but the dialectic cares about you); the pervasive sophistication about political issues. All this is new to an American. At home I am, I hope, fairly knowledgeable about politics; here I am a rank amateur, a neophyte, with an American tendency to look for a comfortable formula and hope for the best. My Israeli friends are not like that; they don't take comfort easily; they are accustomed to a narrow margin.

AN AMAZING FACT: In the United States, from the beginning to the end of the Vietnam War, I knew hardly a single person who had fought in the war or who had a brother or a son in the fighting. The war was doubly far away, physically and personally distant. And not only for me, but for my friends and comrades in the peace movement, too. Perhaps that's why our opposition to the war tended so readily to become abstract and ideological. Here the war in Lebanon is doubly close. The battles were fought twenty-nine miles from Haifa, half the distance between Baltimore and Washington; and everyone has been there or has friends or children there. On a day when rumors were circulating of a renewed war with Syria, I visited the home of a family who had a son at the front. We talked politics all through the evening, with hardly a pause for greetings when I came in; we stopped only to watch the television news. The apartment windows command a view of the Knesset, on top of one of the Jerusalem hills, and we watched while we talked for any signs of activity—cars arriving, helicopters landing. But the hill was quiet, and by the end of the evening it seemed that there wouldn't be any more fighting after all. One has to sit in an apartment like that at a time like that to understand the Israeli commitment to peace. Perhaps the families of soldiers are always a peace constituency, but in Israel there is no other constituency. How then have successive governments made war? Only by persuading the country that the wars were (as they usually were) unavoidable: *ein breira*, there is no alternative. The greatest political mistake that Begin made in defending the Lebanese adventure was to call it a "war of choice."

THE ISRAELI peace movement is something quite different from anything I have known in the United States. Perhaps the fundamental difference is simply this: that the Vietnam War was fought by one group of people and (with only a few exceptions) opposed by another. In Israel it is soldiers home from the front, reservists who have just completed their tours of duty, or who are about to go off, who lead the protest demonstrations. But this difference itself has roots in the sense that Israelis share, and Americans don't, that there have been, before, and may be again, wars that are not wars of choice. National security is a real issue here. That's why the Lebanese war, even to those who most strongly oppose it, is not, finally, like the American war in Vietnam: "Lebanon is on our border." And that's also why no one in Peace Now cultivates anything comparable to the anti-Americanism of the American peaceniks. The mood of alienation and rage, symbolized by the spelling of "Amerika" or the waving of Vietcong flags, doesn't exist here—at least I have not encountered it. The state is still a value, the army still a necessity, even to the most radical critics.

EARLY JUNE: a peace march and rally in Tel Aviv. I go along to watch and report, but also to add one more body to the mass of bodies. The organizers are nervous, as smart organizers will always be, that there won't be enough people. But it is the first anniversary of the war, and the anniversary is an attraction. Over one hundred thousand people turn out—the largest Peace Now demonstration yet (the massive rally after Sabra and Shatila was jointly sponsored with the Labor Party). In that crowd I am wholly superfluous, but I am also entirely at home: everyone I know in Israel is there. My friends mix with the crowd as if to take attendance: it is a small country. This one, they tell me, is flying home from England but his plane is late; that one is still in Lebanon; this one has a sick child; that one is in her ninth month—they are all excused. But so and so isn't here just because he is tired, and it's not time yet to be tired. The people in the square are overwhelmingly European. Half the country is missing, and for that there are no excuses. It is the major weakness of the peace movement, which still draws its strength from the old elites.

But the strength is real enough. I can feel it in the speeches. The first is delivered by an officer just back from Lebanon, and it strikes a note without precedent, again, in my experience of peace movements and peace rallies. The government, he says, is destroying *our* army, undermining morale, risking life to no purpose, weakening the forces on which our security still depends. The other speeches are delivered by a balanced set of speakers, all of them movement activists, no celebrities: the mother of a soldier, a Moroccan professor, a young man wearing a yarmulka. The speeches are short, analytic, passionate, concrete. No one quotes from Lenin's theory of imperialism, which is a great relief to me, and a sign, I think, of seriousness. When the last speech is finished, the crowd sings "*Hatikvah*" and quietly disperses. Was I ever at a rally in the United States in the '60s or early '70s that ended with the singing of the national anthem? I can't think of one. "America the Beautiful," perhaps, but not the "Star Spangled Banner." We would have been embarrassed; that was *their* song.

PEACE NOW has no songs of its own, a friend explained to me. There is no Israeli Bob Dylan or Joan Baez because there is no counterculture; or, the peace movement isn't part of whatever counterculture there is (the best of the popular songwriters and singers, Naomi Shemer, is on the other side). Peace Now is a mainstream movement, and "*Hatikvah*" is an appropriate song: our army, our country, and our national anthem. Begin and his followers, it might plausibly be said, represent a politi-

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cal counterculture, as the original name of their party suggests: they are the Revisionists. They have come in from the fringe, but they still act like outsiders. Labor is still the establishment—hence the extraordinary caution, the painful responsibility, of its criticism, while the Likud is as reckless in office as it was out of it. It isn't the government so much as the opposition to the Opposition.

I HAVE BEEN teaching a seminar on "war and morality" at Hebrew University to a mixed group of graduate students and upper-level B.A. candidates from the political science, international relations, and philosophy departments. The readings and the discussions are in English, so the course attracts some visiting Americans who are young and bright and very much like the students I have taught before. The Israelis are different. They are older; they have all been in the army; the men have fought, not only in Lebanon but in earlier campaigns, too. A number of them are from elite units, like the commandos and the paratroopers; they have been to Entebbe, Maalot, Beirut (long before June of 1982); they are the survivors of bloody engagements, with a far better sense than mine for the extremities of modern politics. Compared to them, American university students seem like people to whom nothing has ever happened.

The class is hardly a representative sample of Israeli young people; the students are almost all on the left, as social sciences students tend to be at all the major Israeli universities, and there is little political disagreement among them. I had worried in advance about shouting matches like those that take place regularly in the Knesset, and had asked the students not to use Lebanese examples in our philosophical and historical arguments. We would talk about Lebanon only outside the seminar room. Mostly the ban held, but even when it didn't, the discussions were quiet and serious. And they had this special quality: that there was no cynicism, none of that sophomoric wisdom that I have always encountered when I teach this material, which holds that in war soldiers just do what they have to do and then accuse their enemies of atrocities. The oldest student in the class, a man my own age, long active in the kibbutz movement, came to my office to explain the seriousness: "You can see them *worrying*," he said to me. They expect to have to fight again; they are thinking about what they will do in this case or that one.

A BREAKFAST MEETING with Yehoshofat Harkabi, who was once (in the 1950s) chief of military intelligence and now teaches international politics at the university. Harkabi recently published a book on the Bar Kochba revolt of 132 A.D. which has stirred up a lively debate in the popular press. The book (*The Bar Kochba Syndrome: Risk and Realism in International Politics*, published by Rossel Books) carefully works through the primary materials and the recent scholarship, but it has an immediate political purpose. It is a critique of ideological (and theological) fantasies and military adventures. We know in fact very little about the man Bar Kochba, a brave rebel and a false messiah. There has been a fairly energetic effort to turn him into a national hero, and the youth movement of Begin's Revisionists is named for Betar, the hill fortress where Bar Kochba made his last stand. And yet the consequences of the revolt were disastrous; by the time the Romans were finished suppressing it, the Jews were a minority in their own land. Harkabi thinks that Israelis today must understand not only the extent of the disaster but its reason: the failure, perhaps the willful surrender, of political intelligence.

He sees a similar failure in the invasion of Lebanon, for this was a war waged for the sake of grandiose and improbable ends—a war to destroy the P.L.O and thereby "solve" the Palestinian problem and open the way for the annexation of the West Bank; a war to create a new order in Lebanon, a Christian state that, since it could never have survived on its own, could only have been a satellite of Israel; a war to destroy the Syrian army and perhaps to topple the Assad government; and only last, and secondarily, a war to defend the Galilee against P.L.O. artillery attack. It was, Harkabi thinks, the perfect example of a Revisionist war, Jabotinsky's as much as Begin's and Sharon's, shaped by ideological pretension: war as a grand rhetorical gesture. He hopes now that Begin stays in power long enough so that Labor is not saddled with the consequences of that gesture: the Palestinian problem not solved, the Lebanese not saved, the Syrians not defeated, and Israel bleeding in the north. Let it be Begin who finally withdraws, saving appearances as best he can; and let the people see what really happened and who is responsible.

HARKABI THINKS that a critique of the war requires nothing more than a description of its outcomes. The war is a strategic disaster. Most of my students take a somewhat different view. They think that the war was morally wrong from the start and without regard to its outcomes. Some of them would have defended a little war, aimed solely at the P.L.O. artillery, a war that stopped at the forty-five-kilometer limit. But they know that that's not the war in which they fought. The attack on the Syrians, the move to Beirut (and perhaps to Tripoli) was intended all along. Sharon did not expand his campaign in response to provocations; he did not simply seize opportunities; the war was grandiose from the beginning, and the lives that were lost were so many sacrifices to grandiosity. In the United States, many of us, friends of Israel, tried to pretend that inside Sharon's fat war there was a skinny war that we could justify. But the truth is that the fat war was the only war there was. This was indeed a war of choice: with high hopes and little understanding, Begin and Sharon threw the dice.

They had no right to do that, no right to risk our lives, to kill so many others; that is not what our army is for—this is what my students said when we finally met, in one of their apartments, for a long, intense, absorbing conversation about Lebanon. At that moment, indeed, Lebanon looked like a bloody mess. But who can describe the long-term results of the war? It is not inconceivable that the defeat

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and dispersion of the P.L.O. forces (and now the revolt against Arafat's leadership) will ultimately make it possible for King Hussein or the Arabs of the West Bank to take political initiatives of their own. That wasn't the purpose of the war (and the initiatives won't have much effect unless there is a government in Israel willing to respond to them), but it might happen. Even if it does happen, however, it won't justify the war—any more than the peace with Egypt justifies Sadat's Yom Kippur attack. Wars can't be justified by their distant consequences, for there are too many intervening factors, and we can never be sure that similar results might not have been achieved without the fighting and the terrible loss of life. Wars are just or unjust in prospect, not in retrospect. My students know this without having to work through my reading list; it is what they have always been taught. The wars they expect to fight, and willingly fight, the wars of self-defense, forced on them by implacable enemies, not wars of choice designed by their own leaders.

THOUGH THEY condemn the war, these young people defend the conduct of the war. They know what they are defending, for together they fought on all the major fronts: against the Syrians, against the P.L.O. in the South, around Beirut. They fought unwillingly, but even the willing soldiers, they insist, fought honorably, accepting risks to themselves in order to minimize the risks they imposed on others. Home on leave or after the fighting, my students were amazed and upset by what they saw of the Western reporting of the war. They heard things said that they knew to be flatly untrue, and other things that they knew to be exaggerations or distortions of their own experience: that they had destroyed the cities of Lebanon (as if the seven years of civil war and Syrian intervention never happened); that they had killed tens of thousands of civilians; that they had brutalized and terrorized the survivors. The description of Israelis in Lebanon as Nazi murderers made things easier for Begin; his opponents always had to dissociate themselves from that sort of criticism before they could begin their own. And, of course, that sort of criticism made many opponents less eager to say anything at all, lest they seem to be joining the chorus of hate.

The defense of Israeli conduct was especially persuasive because no one pretended that the army was the embodiment of virtue. What happened this time, the students said, was a matter of effort, education, training—a recovery of the army from the low point it had reached during the Litani operation of 1978. There had been many incidents then of brutality, looting, indiscipline. These were discussed in the press, but more intensely debated within the army itself where it became a matter of professional pride that Litani not be repeated. Even so, what most Israelis expected in the summer of 1982, I think, was a more elegant version of the 1978 operation. Certainly they did not expect to have to organize a siege of Beirut. Once Israeli forces reached the southern and eastern outskirts of the city, and cut the Beirut-Damascus road, an extraordinary and agonized discussion began at every level of the army about what to do next. The debate over Litani got started only after the fighting was finished; now, while the fighting continued, the army argued. I cannot think of anything quite like this in recent (or for that matter in distant) military history: an army arguing, officers and men, over the conduct of a war in progress. Colonel Eli Geva, who commanded some of the forces south of the city, resigned his commission rather than face the prospect of leading his men into Beirut. One of my students, also a colonel, a professional soldier for ten years, wrote a letter to *Ha'aretz* supporting Geva and was summarily dismissed from the army. Now he studies philosophy at the university. (But on the very day that General Eitan retired as chief of staff, he was invited to resume his command.)

ISRAEL HAS a better army than it does a government. Not only is the army more competent than the government, its officers are politically and morally more sophisticated than government officials are. I met recently with a military sociologist who lectures on democracy at the army's school for officers just outside Jerusalem. The lecture course is required for all officers, who take turns visiting the school. Now it is to be supplemented with less formal discussions of civil disobedience and conscientious objection. These are new issues in Israel, and it is characteristic that the government reacts to them with shouts of treason, while the army begins a course of study. (I don't mean to suggest that there are no army officers ready to shout treason; there are, among them the former chief of staff.) I managed to get hold of some exercises, problem sets, used in that course and had them translated. One of them looked (hopefully?) to the future. It went something like this: You are the commander of a battalion of soldiers

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on the West Bank; your men include representatives of all political positions from right to left, orthodox to secular. The government has just accepted a freeze on settlements. *Gush Emunim* denounces the freeze as a capitulation to American pressure and publicly proclaims its intention to set up an illegal settlement in your area. You are ordered to stop the settlement, using force if necessary. How do you explain this order to your men?

THAT RIGHT-WING soldiers might refuse orders of this sort is probably the best argument for left-wing soldiers to accept orders of other sorts. After all, it was Sharon himself who forced the evacuation of Yamit in the Sinai. But there are additional arguments. One of the great strengths of the peace movement is that it doesn't represent a politics of alienation. Israel has by now a large emigration: people leave the country mostly because they hope to find economic opportunities outside, sometimes, perhaps, because they can't live any longer with the strains of politics and war. But there are very few internal émigrés, who retreat from everyday politics to despair and cynicism or to one or another of the ideological versions of self-hate. The refusal of military service will look to most Israelis like a retreat of that sort, a surrender of membership. It isn't that, at least not yet: the people I have met in the organization called *Yesh Gevul* (There is a Limit), who have signed a pledge not to go to Lebanon, are still Israeli patriots, committed to a strong army, ready to serve in other campaigns. But they are launched on a politics that may well cut them off, not only from a mass base, but from any hope of solidarity and influence. In a country radically dependent on its army, they are flirting with sectarianism and alienation.

At the same time, they command respect in the larger peace movement and even, occasionally, in the country at large. For the war they have refused to fight was fought beyond the Israeli consensus and without the sanction of the most widely accepted strategic and moral doctrines. The same respect extends to the smaller number of people, certain to grow in coming months, who refuse to serve on the West Bank. Likud's settlement and annexationist policies also don't have the broad support that previous governments thought necessary on matters that touch so deeply the country's survival and well-being. Israel is a democracy that has not, in the past, been run by bare majorities. A narrow margin in the Knesset has not been taken as a warrant for political transformation or military adventure. But the current settlement policy aims at transformation and entails, it now appears, military adventures. And so the government has created a new kind of opposition among some of its best young people—an opposition that moves from protest to disobedience.

A good many of the participants in this new opposition come from the kibbutz movement, which has always provided the army with a disproportionate number of its pilots, commandos, officers, and heroes. In May I spoke to a seminar organized by one of the kibbutz organizations for its own leaders and educators. The subject was conscientious objection. The participants were convinced—rightly, I think—that kibbutz youth should continue to serve in the army, and to volunteer for the elite units. But they also understood that the education the kibbutz provides, the values it instills, makes service on the West Bank, as occupation police confronting sullen adults and stone-throwing teenagers, particularly difficult. Was there a "red line" beyond which the movement would have to make a collective decision to endorse refusal? Some people thought that formal annexation marked the line—for then Israel would cease to be a democratic state. Others did not want to think about such questions. They could see only marginality and isolation for the kibbutzim if the commitment to national service was ever given up. Refusal would be the acceptance of a radical defeat.

Another argument against refusal is that very few people in the peace movement are unilateralists. Peace Now does not advocate immediate withdrawal from the West Bank; its members want a different sort of occupation—but an occupation still; and so they accept the need for an army of occupation. They are still waiting for an eastern Sadat, or at least for some plausible negotiating partner among Palestinians or Jordanians. What they want now is end to settlement and a public commitment to withdraw eventually from all or most of the occupied territories. I was in Israel when King Hussein refused to join the negotiating process, and the disappointment of the left (and the glee of the government) was palpable. Israeli leftists are dependent on Arab moderates, and the persistent failure of the Arab world to produce or sustain a moderate politics has been disastrous. The left in Israel holds a difficult position, defending a politics of "if and when."

WHAT IS really at issue, however, is not the future negotiating posture of the government, but the internal character of the state, its democratic values, the quality of its public and private life. The stakes are high. I have lived in Jerusalem for three months and watched my friends here work and worry, argue and organize.

I admire them for their deep engagement and their high spirits. They love this place, and they know why they are here. Even after the killing of Emil Grunzweig at a Peace Now demonstration in February of this year—the first political murder among Jews since the founding of the state—they continue to take a fierce pleasure in political activity. Perhaps it is a general rule: when stakes are high, spirits are high. But I am afraid that the connection isn't stable. Years of crisis can have a corrosive effect. At some point, perhaps, the best people will withdraw from politics and only thugs and fanatics will be left. It has happened in other countries, and it can happen here too. *It hasn't happened yet*, but the prospect is frightening and people talk about it often. The policies of the present government work systematically to create a version of Northern Ireland on the West Bank. If those policies succeed, high spirits will one day give way to despair—for the resulting violence won't be limited or containable. If Hebron becomes a new Belfast, can Jerusalem be far behind?

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The Never-Never Land of racial politics.

CAN THE KLAN RIDE AGAIN?

BY PHILLIP FINCH

THIS WAS supposed to be the summer that Bill Wilkinson led a white pogrom against blacks, Latin American immigrants, and all the sinister forces of polyculturalism. Ronald Reagan was going to cut social programs so drastically that blacks and other minorities would riot. Once again, as in 1968, white America would see its shops looted, its cities burned. But this time whites would rise up against the rioters. They would take up arms and rally around a white leader, someone who had always stood up for the race—someone like Bill Wilkinson.

At least that was how Wilkinson saw it in early 1981 from his vantage point as Imperial Wizard of the Invisible Empire of the K.K.K., the largest of several dozen Ku Klux Klan factions. The cities would boil after about two years of welfare-slashing, he figured, so the third summer of the Reagan Presidency would likely be the time that he and the Klan rode a mighty tide of white wrath.

But Wilkinson's schedule has had a few setbacks. Even if all else in his bizarre scenario should come to pass, Wilkinson will be in no position to exploit a sudden surge of white resentment. At the moment he is struggling just to hold together the few thousand white malcontents he has managed to recruit since 1975, when he broke away from the Klan group then headed by David Duke. Not long after he made his prediction of racial chaos, the entire renegade right was stunned by the disclosure that for several years, while he was making his Invisible Empire the noisiest and most militant of the national Klans, Bill Wilkinson also was an informant for the F.B.I. Since then he has been fighting, and mostly losing, a battle to hold together his disenchanted membership.

There is more at stake for him than prestige. His Klan, like all others, exists almost month-to-month on dues payments. Last winter Wilkinson declared the Invisible Empire legally bankrupt. But such an extreme dose of reality isn't likely to discourage the Klans' grand dreams. Nor is it likely to dismay their self-appointed opponents, chief among them the Progressive Labor Party, the Communist Workers Party, and the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee. The Klans and their leftist opponents are cozy joint tenants in a Never-Never Land of racial politics, in which a united K.K.K. is perpetually awesome, its strength and influence undiminished during the last fifty years.

This exercise in mutual comfort might be harmless if the Klansmen and their mirror images kept their delusion to themselves. But each side, for its own reason, is eager to propagate the myth. When they succeed, the result, as in Washington last November, can be frightening.

The radical leftists reacted with righteous zeal when the leader of one Klan faction, the Knights of the K.K.K., announced that his group had obtained a permit to march down Pennsylvania Avenue on November 27. Hundreds of posters denouncing the Klan's appearance were plastered on D.C. walls, most in the poorest black neighborhoods. For several days before the march, cars with loudspeakers rolled through the same neighborhoods, appealing for attendance at one of the four counter-rallies and demonstrations that were to take place on the same day. To ensure adequate numbers at these events, the anti-Klan forces hired buses to bring in out-of-town demonstrators from as far away as Boston and Cleveland. When the great day came, the Klansmen were whisked away in a police bus (there were scarcely enough of them to fill it), and the counterdemonstrators staged a riot, smashing shop windows and scaring passersby.

Thus much time, trouble, and money was wasted to kick a corpse. Even without the riot the effort would have been counterproductive, since the K.K.K.'s only hope of resurrection is the foolishness of its putative enemies.

The Klan's hold on our national psyche is its most durable feature. Reconstruction's original hooded nightriders, and their imitators through much of this century, succeeded beyond their imagining in establishing themselves as paladins of terror. And even though today that is a reputation without basis, the Klan factions feed on it. So, in a curious way, do their noisy leftist opponents, who predominate among those urging physical confrontation with the K.K.K. They evoke the specter of a united, politically significant Klan, thriving and still dangerous—an image at least thirty years out of date. The unified Klan broke up in 1949. Now there are more than thirty splinters, and in this case proliferation is a sign of weakness. Even in aggregate, which they never are, the Klans are small and impotent, hamstrung by public opinion and by police scrutiny.

Only three Klans make even a pretense of national appeal. Seven or eight others try to hold together skeletal state organizations; the rest are local and ephemeral, typically twenty or thirty men who live in the same county or work in the same mill or factory and whose affiliation

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Phillip Finch is author of a recently published book on the radical right, *God, Guns, and Guts* (G. P. Putnam's Sons).

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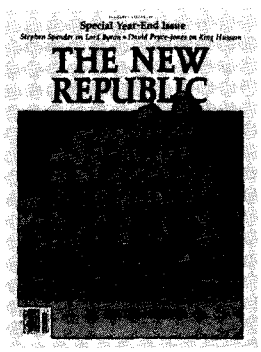

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seldom lasts longer than a year or two. The hood and the burning cross are as identifiable as the Golden Arches, but they are unrestricted trademarks. An ambitious young racist can become an Imperial Wizard by taking the title and finding two or three sympathizers who will agree. That's the easy part. Much tougher is carving out a market share in what by every indication is a small and impecunious pool of potential support.

The Invisible Empire's "international headquarters" is a squat, windowless, concrete building next to a rural trailer park outside Denham Springs, Louisiana, about twenty miles up the highway from Baton Rouge. From his office there Wilkinson plans such Klan spectaculars as the Invisible Empire's rally in Montgomery County, Maryland (two weeks before the demonstration in D.C.), at which police and reporters outnumbered Klansmen by more than ten to one. Maryland was never strong Klan territory, but the story is similar even in the former K.K.K. heartland.

THAT HASN'T always been so. The original Klan, which was formed in 1867 by a former Confederate general named Nathan Bedford Forrest, was violent and effective in rebelling against Reconstruction's social changes. Throughout much of the South, it attacked Radical and Reform politicians, and raided the homes and businesses of freedmen. By beatings, lynchings, and harassment, it sought to reinstitute the old order, and, in great measure, it succeeded. Forrest disbanded the Klan in 1869; the violent elements were getting out of hand, he said. By 1871 the original K.K.K. had ceased to exist.

It might have remained that way forever if not for the enormous success of the 1915 film, *The Birth of a Nation*, produced and directed by D. W. Griffith, son of a Confederate battle hero. The film was based on a popular novel, *The Clansman*, written ten years earlier by a Southern preacher named Thomas Dixon Jr., who had grown up during Reconstruction. Both film and book romanticized the nightriders as chivalrous saviors of the Old South. *The Birth of a Nation* played for ten years around the country, sometimes at the enormous price of $2 a ticket. Its receipts were unmatched until the release of *Gone with the Wind*, another paean to the Confederate past.

The Birth of a Nation was in its full, sensational bloom when a former backwoods preacher and salesman named William J. Simmons organized a revived K.K.K. Simmons, who had years of experience promoting lodges and fraternities, borrowed the original Klan's structure and its mystical nomenclature of Kludds and Klaliffs and Kleagles and Exalted Cyclopses. He offered lifetime memberships for $10 and set up state branches around the country. There was additional profit to be made from official issue Klan sheets and hoods. In short, Simmons ran the Klan as a business, a practice that continues among the larger Klan factions today. (Bill Wilkinson sometimes sounds like a fussy franchiser when he talks about the problems of maintaining standards in distant klaverns.)

The new Klan was an immediate, frightening success. At its crest, from about 1920 to 1925, it had two million members throughout the South, the Midwest, and the West. Hugo Black, later a Supreme Court Justice, joined in 1923, and three years later was elected to the Senate from Alabama. The sculptor of the Mount Rushmore monument, Gutzon Borglum, was a member. In 1941 the governor of Georgia admitted that he had joined Klan flogging parties two decades earlier. The K.K.K. in those years was responsible for uncounted acts of terrorism against Jews, blacks, and Catholics. The two million voted, too. During the early '20s the Klan dominated state politics in Texas, Colorado, Oregon, Alabama, and Georgia. Klansmen and Klan supporters won elections for governor, to Congress, to state legislatures. Klan judges stacked Klan juries. In 1925 President Calvin Coolidge refused to condemn a K.K.K. march through downtown Washington.

But by 1926 the K.K.K.'s influence was waning in most states. The Klans remained strong in many pockets of the South, especially in Alabama and Mississippi, where lynchings and floggings went unchecked. But elsewhere it was no longer a force. Simmon's Klan passed through a number of hands and broke up with the death of Grand Dragon Sam "Doc" Green. Klansmen were cinema heroes no more; by 1951, in Warner Brothers' *Storm Warning*, the K.K.K. was portrayed as the villainous and brutish target of a crusading district attorney, played by Ronald Reagan.

Beginning around 1960, the splinter Klans, especially the White Knights of the K.K.K., under Sam Bowers, and Robert Shelton's United Klans of America, began to attract the most desperate opponents of civil rights. Alabama Klansmen often accosted and beat strangers whom they suspected of being civil rights volunteers, and Klansmen were convicted of numerous bombings. After 1963, though, membership and activity dropped once more. F.B.I. records tell of whole klaverns being disbanded because of the bureau's Counter-Intelligence Program, but local public opinion had as much to do with the decline. Even rural Southern towns that once had been its strongholds now scorned the K.K.K.

An accurate count of total Klan strength today is impossible. Nobody, not even Klan leaders, knows the figure. Different Wizards and Dragons know the headcount of their own groups, but they don't share that information with their rivals. (In a deposition given this summer in connection with the Invisible Empire's bankruptcy proceedings, Wilkinson claimed a national membership of eighteen hundred—a figure well below any previous estimate of that Klan faction.) The Anti-Defamation League puts the membership total at between eight thousand and ten thousand. The Anti-Klan Network, an umbrella group in which radical leftists are heavily represented, estimates a total of twelve thousand to fifteen thousand. Klanwatch, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center breaks down its estimate by faction: three thousand for the Invisible Empire, three thousand for the Knights of the K.K.K., one thousand to two thousand for the United Klans of America, and about one thousand among several dozen local Klans. All those guesses seem high, given the evidence. It is doubtful that even the com-

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bined mailing lists of all the Klans would total more than ten thousand different names. The last F.B.I. estimate of Klan strength in 1975 was twenty-two hundred, and the Klans are unlikely to have quadrupled their numbers in eight years. If private estimates of Klan numbers tend to err on the high side, it's partly because infiltrators or informants are more likely to see a general mailing list than the much smaller and more closely held list of dues-paying members. The number of regular contributors is smaller still, and smallest of all is the number of active, committed members who can be expected to show up at a rally in a distant city. There's another factor at work inflating those numbers: most anti-Klan groups have an interest in making the Klans appear stronger. The stronger the Klans seem to be, the more pressing is the mission of their opponents. Two years ago Klanwatch based a national fund-raising campaign on the growing threat from the Klans, bolstering its case with a newspaper clipping that described a supposed K.K.K. guerrilla training camp which was little more than a publicity hoax. Sometimes, ignoring the reality of the modern Klan is just good business.

TO BE SURE, some of the small quasi-Klans, fringe of a fringe, are still capable of scattered violence. Some of the six men tried and acquitted in the killings of five Communist Workers Party members in Greensboro belonged to one such obscure local Klan. (Those six, and three others, recently were indicted on civil rights conspiracy charges stemming from that incident.) So did the three men convicted in the shooting of four black women in Chattanooga in 1980. Members of the small Klans tend to be erratic, emotional, and dangerous. They would be so even if they did not call themselves Klansmen.

But because of police scrutiny, the Klans' potential for organized violence is far less than ever. In the last two and a half years, testimony by informants has led to convictions of white racists in at least three different cases of bombing conspiracy, two involving fringe Klans. Right-wing extremists are convinced that infiltrators are everywhere, and they are right. Thus the revelation two years ago that Wilkinson had been an F.B.I. informant since 1975 was not as astounding as it might seem. The more visible Klans are rather like massage parlors, existing as they do at the limits of public and legal tolerance. To stay in business an Imperial Wizard must run what amounts to a clean, honest house. For Wilkinson, cooperating with the F.B.I. was a way of keeping the beat cops happy.

The only remaining vestige of the Klans' old power is the reaction they can provoke. Turmoil provides what little financial and moral support they receive. White racists' money, what there is of it, goes to the Klan that is best able to generate publicity by causing civil disturbance wherever it appears. Over the last eight years, the least unsuccessful Klan has been Wilkinson's Invisible Empire. Wilkinson sought a safe middle ground between violence, which would force a Klan underground, and the TV talk-show route, which is too bland to appeal to potential dues-payers. The tactics of confrontation were a good compromise. The Invisible Empire has done its best to raise hell, with spotty results. Its most recent effort, in Miami after the riots last December, fell flat.

But the Klan of old still rides, at least in the reckoning of the anti-Klan extremists. Their message is unequivocal: the Klan is a menace that must be stopped by any means necessary. From this a striking symbiosis has evolved. When a Klan group announces plans for a rally, anti-Klan activists, as in Washington last November, begin to marshal forces against it. With their loudspeakers and posters they publicize the Klansmen's arrival, getting word of the rally into places the Klan never could hope to reach. Several thousand people, as a result, appear at the appointed time and place. They have come to shout against the two or three dozen Klansmen, maybe even tear them apart. But the Klansmen know the police won't let that happen. To the new K.K.K., any crowd is a good crowd, the more unruly the better, for trouble helps establish the Klansmen's credentials as racists of action, not words.

This is by no means a one-sided proposition. For radical leftists, the Klan is a way to get the attention of the otherwise unresponsive masses: blacks and Chicanos, white liberals, even conservatives—everybody who is against the Klan. Once they've got the floor, they hammer away at issues that are at best incidental: STOP THE KLAN . . . SMASH THE WAR DRIVE . . . SUPPORT REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLES OF WORKERS ABROAD . . . TAKE INDUSTRY AWAY FROM ITS CORRUPT AND INEFFICIENT OWNERS . . . NATIONALIZE IT UNDER A WORKER'S GOVERNMENT, read one poster, issued by the Sparticist League last November.

For the principals in this bargain, what happened in Washington on November 27 was a total success. The Klan group that planned to march that day, the Knights of the K.K.K. (David Duke's old bunch), had been moribund for two years. It was a measure of the group's vitality that, on the most auspicious day of its existence, thirty-seven members could be found to march down Pennsylvania Avenue. This would have been an unparalleled opportunity for the world to see the real New Klan, a tawdry little collection of three dozen and one, trooping down the boulevard without even a picket sign raised on the sidewalk to distract from the sight. But the Knights are moribund no more. By the peculiar logic of the racist right, any Klan that can attract five thousand opponents, some of whom turn to burning police cars and looting shop windows, is a Klan on the move.

Wilkinson is a canny opportunist. Two years ago he would not have let the Knights keep such spoils to themselves for long. Now he seems preoccupied by internal problems, as most Klan leaders almost always are. If he can manage it, he may yet try to stage a rally in one of the big Northeastern cities. It would be a bold stroke to shore up his disintegrating membership. And he will be counting on his faithful opposition to cooperate as splendidly as they did with the Knights. Given enough of the right kinds of enemies, he hopes, he and the K.K.K. may yet survive to ride again. It's a slender hope, but it's the only one they've got.

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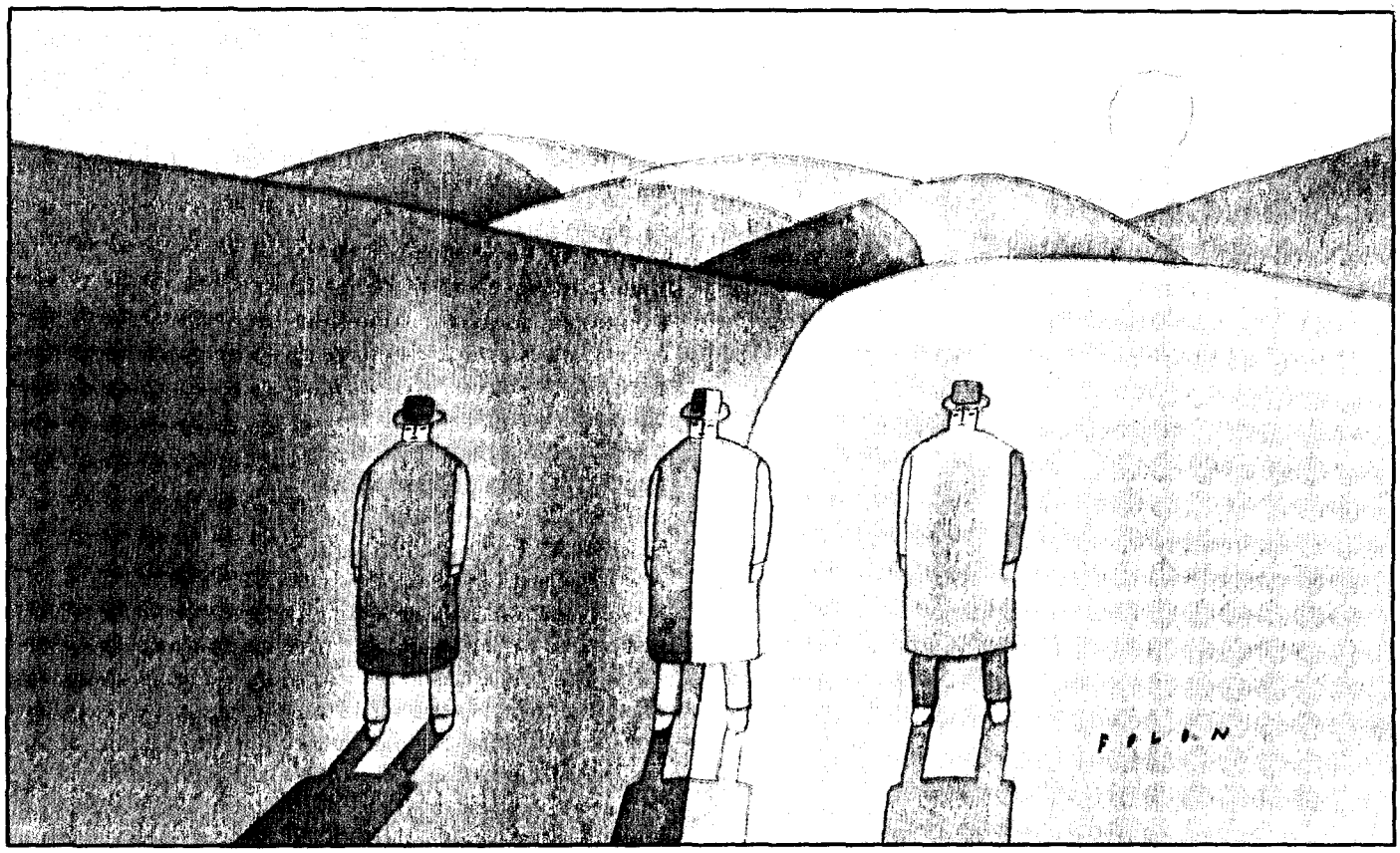
NUCLEAR ELECTRICITY
Who Stands Where



At a time of intense criticism of nuclear-generated electricity, an independent academic study found surprisingly strong support among persons considered well informed on the subject.

The study was part of a large project directed by Professors Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter and sponsored by the Research Institute of International Change at Columbia University, Smith College, and the Graduate Program in Science, Technology, and Public Policy at George Washington University.

A survey of scientists

In mid-1980, little more than a year after the accident at Three Mile Island, a detailed questionnaire on energy issues was sent to a purely random sample of: (1) scientists listed in *American Men and Women of Science,* (2) scientists in energy-related disciplines, and (3) scientists in fields closely related to nuclear energy.

Asked how best to proceed with nuclear energy (see Table 1), an overwhelming majority from all groups felt that the nation should continue with the development of nuclear energy. Most felt we should proceed rapidly.

This high level of support is echoed in Table 2, which notes positive attitudes toward the acceptability of risk posed by nuclear plants; the scientists' personal willingness to have a nuclear plant located where they live; and the scientists' confidence that enough knowledge exists to solve the scien-

Table 1
VIEWS OF SCIENTISTS ON HOW TO PROCEED WITH NUCLEAR ENERGY

Random Sample	Energy Experts	Nuclear Experts	
53%	70%	92%	Proceed rapidly
36	25	8	Proceed slowly
7	4	0	Halt development
3	1	0	Dismantle plants

Table 2
SCIENTISTS' ATTITUDES ON NUCLEAR ENERGY ISSUES

Random Sample	Energy Experts	Nuclear Experts	
65%	75%	99%	Risks acceptable
69	80	98	Willing to locate nuclear plants in their cities
75	91	100	Enough knowledge to solve nuclear problems

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tific and technical problems posed by nuclear energy.

Expanding the study

Such positive results were somewhat surprising to the researchers. They decided to expand their study. This was a time when public concern was high and the nuclear regulatory environment was toughening considerably, so the researchers wondered whether decision makers in the nuclear field would be as wary of nuclear power plants as the man in the street.

To find out, the researchers mailed questionnaires to top decision makers in seven different categories:

- the nuclear power industry
- the financial community
- the Nuclear Regulatory Commission
- other regulatory agencies involved with nuclear energy
- members of Congress who were involved with nuclear policy
- outside experts (scientists, social scientists and consultants involved with nuclear energy issues)
- groups with professed anti-nuclear views.

The results were again surprising. As Table 3 indicates, outside experts and financiers were as united in their support of nuclear energy development as were industry executives. The only significant opposition came from the heads of the anti-nuclear groups. A few members of Congress and some regulators also expressed opposition. (It should be noted that response from Congress was low in number.)

Table 3
POLICY PREFERENCES ON NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT

Anti-Nuclear Groups	Industry	Financiers	NRC	Other Regulators	Congress	Outside Experts	
0%	93%	94%	65%	54%	40%	69%	Proceed rapidly
0	5	6	35	25	40	26	Proceed slowly
33	2	0	0	8	20	5	Halt development
67	0	0	0	13	0	0	Dismantle plants

Table 4 reinforces the pattern. Majorities of all decision-making sectors except the anti-nuclear groups believed nuclear plants safe, the risks acceptable, the problems solvable, and they would be willing to live near a reactor.

The questionnaire also sought to learn what potential problems within the industry were considered most serious. Most of the anti-nuclear groups' leaders rated most of the problems as "very serious." None of the problems was considered that serious by a majority of the other decision makers. Only high-level waste disposal was considered very serious by a majority of persons within any of these seven groups.

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 has addressed this problem by establishing a procedure and a timetable leading to the safe disposal of nuclear waste. The concept of burying the waste in stable geological formations deep in the earth has been endorsed by the National Academy of Sciences.

Table 4
GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARD NUCLEAR ENERGY

Anti-Nuclear Groups	Industry	Financiers	NRC	Other Regulators	Congress	Outside Experts	
100%	2%	0%	4%	37%	25%	12%	Risks unacceptable
0	94	61	72	60	43	74	Very confident we can solve problems
100	2	0	7	28	28	5	Plants unsafe
0	97	83	94	60	53	88	Would live near reactors

What sources can we count on today?

There was more agreement when the leaders were asked which energy sources would make the greatest contributions to our needs by the year 2000. The questionnaire listed 16 possible sources ranging alphabetically from biomass to wind power. As Table 5 illustrates, most groups viewed coal as the primary energy source, followed by oil and then either natural gas, nuclear fission, or conservation. The anti-nuclear groups are the only dissenters, rating conservation as their top choice, solar heat as a major contributor and dismissing nuclear fission altogether. No other group ranks conservation higher than fourth, expects such a significant contribution from solar heat, or writes off nuclear energy altogether.

Table 5
RESOURCES THAT WILL MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR ENERGY NEEDS

Anti-Nuclear Groups	Industry	Financiers	NRC	Other Regulators	Congress	Outside Experts	
58%	96%	78%	94%	75%	91%	95%	Coal
50	57	50	63	84	67	79	Oil
42	44	41	34	48	52	67	Natural gas
0	52	24	28	52	25	33	Nuclear fission
42	1	0	3	12	10	2	Solar heat
100	16	29	19	50	52	38	Conservation

The researchers found it especially surprising that government agencies which frequently have been critical of nuclear energy were nevertheless looking to this resource for a large contribution. In fact, the other regulators' projection precisely matched that of the nuclear power industry.

An ongoing debate

The debate continues over the risks and rewards of nuclear electricity. In the heat of the debate, it's easy to get the impression that almost everyone has turned against nuclear electricity. This study shows that such an impression would be incorrect.

All energy sources have problems—environmental, safety, reliability, cost. Perhaps someday we'll find a perfect energy source, but until then we must provide for America's energy needs with sources we can count on today.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Designs for Living

Under the credits is a lovely shot of a wooden gate across a short driveway leading to a cottage in the sun. After the credits, a small car drives in from the lower right-hand corner of the screen and pauses at the gate. At the end of the film, the car comes back down that driveway, the gate is closed again, and after a moment's pause for conversation between the occupants, the car drives out the same corner of the screen, leaving us with the opening shot.

Pauline at the Beach
(Orion Classics)

Symmetry is a faith with Eric Rohmer. In his *Six Moral Tales* the symmetry wasn't always as patent as in his latest film, but it was always there, even if ironic, as in *My Night at Maud's*. Symmetry is Rohmer's attempt to reify spiritual design; the start and finish described above are as explicit as he has ever been. This explicitness makes the symmetry more amusing than in Rohmer's past work, but it is also . . . explicit.

The new film, *Pauline at the Beach*, is the third in his new series *Comedies and Proverbs*. (The proverb in this case is from Chrétien de Troyes: "He who talks too much digs his own grave," but it's only loosely applicable to the story.) *Pauline* is an immense improvement over the first two in this series, *The Aviator's Wife* and *Le Beau Mariage*. *Pauline* doesn't have the depth of the best of the *Moral Tales*, but it's deeper than *Mariage*, thank cinema heaven, and it's not the New Wave reheated, as was *Aviator's Wife*. It's recognizable Rohmer. It has his calm in the midst of chaos, his ability to make a film purr along almost as if it had a sagacity of its own vis-à-vis the bumblings and frenzies of the human beings within it.

Essential to the improvement, though not solely responsible for it, is the return of Nestor Almendros to Rohmer's side. Rohmer used a team of three very good cinematographers in his last two films, but the very first moment of *Pauline* makes clear how important Almendros is to Rohmer's quality. Rohmer likes to put a shot before us and *look* at it, wants to drain it of all available savor and significance before a cut—even within the same scene. I'd bet that Almendros advises, besides doing his own work: at least he seems to give Rohmer added confidence in his own film vision.

Almendros lights and composes in a manner that puts emphasis where it belongs but also makes the smallest, farthest detail contribute. Early in *Pauline* a young woman named Marion, played by Arielle Dombasle, is sitting with her fifteen-year-old cousin Pauline, played by Amanda Langlet, at a table in the small garden next to the cottage. They converse about the matters that will eventually open up into the film's plot, but they merely converse; and the camera holds. I felt that I was there with them, listening, feeling the sun, hearing the sound of their voices as much as the words, smelling their different presences as well as the flowers. If I had been sitting there in fact, I wouldn't have wanted a "cut": and I didn't want one in my theater seat. Just before the split second when consciousness of film intruded, Rohmer cut to Pauline alone. Until then (and after) he and Almendros followed the André Bazin principle of interfering as little as possible with the observable universe, of letting surfaces convey interiors. Rohmer and Almendros collaborate, invisibly and visibly.

This hardly means that one can make good films by digging a camera tripod into the ground or nailing it to the floor. First comes conviction about why you are bothering to make films at all; then comes conviction about the material, about the potential cinematic evidence in that material, about your view of the evidence. One can work that equation backward or forward in the best moments of Rohmer, like the last scene of *Chloe in the Afternoon*. (I except *The Marquise of O...* from comparison. Kleist puts that film in a different lode.) But this equation shows some fissures in the case of *Pauline*—in Rohmer's judgment of his material, not the other factors.

As usual, Rohmer takes seemingly simple actions and lets them roll onward, intending to show that there is no such thing as a simple action. Actions have consequences. Marion is a successful Parisian fashion designer, in the process of being divorced. She is spending a few weeks at a cottage near a beach and has invited her young cousin Pauline to stay with her. On the beach they meet Pierre, who was in love with Marion before she married and who now persuades himself that he is still in love with her. Through Pierre, they meet an acquaintance of his named Henri, an ethnologist on vacation from his work in the Pacific. And on the beach they also meet a teenage boy, Sylvain, who takes to Pauline and vice versa.

With these people, plus a young woman who peddles candies on the beach, Rohmer's script weaves webs. The characters almost seem to take their places at the start like acrobats, then, at a signal, begin combinations and somersaults. Sex and love are the prin-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Berlin Alexanderplatz. Fifteen hours and twenty-one minutes, and worth it. R. W. Fassbinder's generally superb film transformation of Alfred Döblin's novel.

The Return of Martin Guerre. Splendid re-creation of period, wonderfully vivid acting in a true story of sixteenth-century rural France.

Ways in the Night. Krzysztof Zanussi's Polish-German film about Poland under German occupation. Intelligent and subtle, with fine actors.

Zelig. Woody Allen's clever, skillful beginning for a film about a man who changed himself to please others. Allen makes us eager to see what will happen to Zelig—then just quits.

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cipal themes, with the former predominating. Bathing suits and summery languor are essential to the film's texture. Nothing is substantively altered for any character by these experiences: the passage through the story results only in particularized symmetry for each. At the end, when Marion and Pauline leave in the car, they pause for a moment to "settle" a point. A few days earlier, the candy girl had been seen, naked, through the window of Henri's bedroom. The male in the room with her was not seen (although the audience knows who it was). For their own inner symmetries, Marion decides to believe it was Sylvain, Pauline decides to believe it was Henri. Having made their compact, the two cousins go back to Paris. Marion's choice assuages damaged pride; Pauline's choice, as the title tells us, is more important. Still, it's the design as such that they are finishing neatly.

Rohmer has been lucky with his actors. I use that term because, like the comparable though greater Robert Bresson before him, Rohmer casts less for demonstrated acting talent than for personal quality, and sometimes, like Bresson, he picks lemons: e.g., some of the people in *The Aviator's Wife*. Here the six principals have selves. The gorgeous Dombasle ("Too perfect," complains Henri) has the surprising insecurity of some beautiful women. Langlet has sweet snub-nosed precocious dignity. Pascal Greggory, the pedantic Pierre, Feodor Atkine, the somewhat *louche* Henri, Simon de la Brosse, the self-assured boy, and Rosette, the nonchalant candy girl, are individually good, and they orchestrate well.

Once again the humane Rohmer shows a strange streak of male cruelty. He showed it in *Chloe in the Afternoon*: Chloe, an exceptionally vulnerable young woman, is humiliated so that the hero's marital devotion can be tested and proved. In *Pauline*, though the film is focused on women and their trials, the peddler is made a blatant slut for male use. Her treatment has some of the class distinction of old comedies—the working-class girl who is used, and expects to be used, by men.

But the ultimate trouble, and there is one, with this diverting film is that it is merely diverting, and Rohmer doesn't seem to know it. Too little is at stake for any character at any point. The characterizations and the discourse about love are at the level of, say, Molnár's *Olym-*

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pia. It takes considerable craft and ingenuity to be a Molnár, but there's no evidence that he thought of *Olympia* as more than an entertainment. Here there's considerable evidence, beginning with the epigraph and continuing with the film's texture, that Rohmer believes his script has spiritual reverberations to match the best *Moral Tales*. For me, there are more plot complications than depth. Symmetry rules here by imposition, it isn't won.

It's cheering to see Rohmer making a film so well again, and making it with Almendros; but the defect in the "equation" cited above is the aerated geometry of this material. It's as if a fine chamber orchestra, capable of the best music, were playing a merely pleasant, bright/poignant tune.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Memoirs of a Moonlighter

Toward the conclusion of the third and last volume of his memoirs, *Final Dress* (Simon & Schuster, 559 pp., $19.95), John Houseman writes:

> I could look back with satisfaction on a series of utterly unpredictable achievements, of which directing Henry Fonda in a Broadway smash hit [*Darrow*] marked the climax but which also included the creation and administration of the country's most advanced theater school [Juilliard], a starring role in a major Hollywood film [*The Paper Chase*] and the formation of an acting company [The Acting Company] that stood alone in the contemporary American theater.

One can argue about the accuracy of some of these proud claims, and question the significance of others, but the passage still manages to suggest the remarkable range of a wildly eclectic career, one responsible for some of the victories, as well as reflecting a few defeats, of American theater culture.

In his two previous books, *Runthrough* and *Front and Center*, Mr. Houseman gracefully described his youth as a Rumanian emigré, his associations with Orson Welles, the Mercury Theater, and the Federal Theater Project, and his career as a Hollywood producer. In *Final Dress*, he tells the story of his later years, when he rescued the congenitally troubled Shakespeare Theater in Stratford, Connecticut, started a professional theater company at U.C.L.A., acted as adviser and director with the A.P.A. company, and, at the age of sixty-six, initiated a whole new career as founder and chief administrator of the drama division at Juilliard, not to mention its youthful offspring, the Acting Company, which still continues to tour the United States each year with a repertory of classical plays.

In addition to all his other activities, Mr. Houseman has now played a role in the formation of at least seven separate theater companies. But although fate (and occasionally a hostile board of trustees) often intervened to affect his decisions, Houseman's inability to remain with a single activity or institution was largely a result of his own restless nature, though it may also have been influenced by the seductive quality of American culture. At the same time that he was applying himself to serious artistic ventures, he was embracing invitations to return to Hollywood to produce movies, to co-produce a television series, and to direct Broadway plays, when he wasn't staging operas, serving on boards, advising foundations, writing memoirs, making personal appearances, or, finally, at age seventy-one, becoming an Academy Award winning motion picture star (later star of the spinoff television series) for his portrayal of Professor Kingsley in *The Paper Chase*.

Mr. Houseman is understandably proud of his capacity to achieve success in a variety of media, as he suggests through extensive quotations from his reviews. He is also proud of what he calls "my professional transformation from a respected but neglected veteran in the theater to one of the most sought-after and highly paid aging male performers in the mass media." But he also recognizes the contradictions inherent in his desire for private glory and financial gain as opposed to his capacity for public sacrifice, and includes some interesting self-reflective passages attributing these vacillations to an early conflict between creative yearnings as an artist and business ambitions as a grain dealer. Whatever the explanation, Houseman seems almost congenitally incapable of turning down an offer or holding down a single job, and even at the moment he is developing the Juilliard program, he is expressing interest in becoming director at the Met and artistic director of the Vivian Beaumont.

Yes, this is the work of an ambitious and gifted achiever, self-satisfied but also capable of self-doubt, particularly in regard to his family. Houseman, for example, is genuinely devoted to his wife, Joan, but regrets that his itinerant life has robbed her both of his companionship and of a stable home, while his bemused, distant relationship with his two sons ("perplexed but mildly affectionate") suggests that he never really got the chance to know them very well. He affected a similar distance from his Juilliard students who thereupon described his playing of Professor Kingsley as no performance at all, simply "the way you behave around here." But if he displays Kingsley's aloofness toward people, he also shares the character's intelligence, urbanity, and weight. What was said of Lear might also be said of Houseman: "We that are young shall never see so much, nor live so long."

YET, SOMETHING troubles me—not about the character of this admirable man, not about his long and often valuable career, but about the cultural context in which he floated. For example, a curious omission in his account of the innumerable shows he did with Stratford or the A.P.A. or the Acting Company is the element of urgency. No matter how expertly or imaginatively they were done, no matter how successfully they were received, we never learn why it was essential at a particular moment in history for him to produce *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Don Juan in Hell* or *Ring Round the Moon*, apart from the fact that the play would balance the season or provide good roles for actors (we never learn much either about the purpose behind the program developed with Michel St. Denis at Juilliard). These are not ignoble ends, but great theater is rarely created simply out of professional or even aesthetic imperatives, as Houseman surely remembered from his experience with Orson Welles's antifascist *Julius Caesar* and his

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anti-Hearst *Citizen Kane*. It is almost always engaged, whether directly or obliquely, with the current anxieties and dilemmas of contemporary society.

I'm not saying that theater production is a form of political activism, simply that it must be informed by suggestive and relevant metaphors if it is effectively to challenge audiences or have any value aside from cultural display. Houseman, who had leftist leanings in his youth, expresses civil libertarian outrage whenever an associate is affected by prejudice or red-baiting, but his passion for social justice does not seem to extend into his concepts or choices, any more than the disturbances of the Vietnam period play much part in his account of the Juilliard training. This discontinuity between the political and the professional life is not unusual in the theater—it has been with us, except for a brief spell in the 1960s, since the McCarthy era—but it may explain why so few of the productions with which Houseman was associated, solid as they were, have become a vivid chapter of theater history.

What I'm missing, I guess, is a sense of obsession, which translates into a commitment to a single passion, idea, or overwhelming purpose. To some extent, this explains Houseman's rootlessness and restlessness, his fondness for media moonlighting. If a man of so many talents is not consumed by a passionate calling, then he will inevitably fall back into a search for personal satisfactions, and when the society is slow to acknowledge the accomplishments of serious artistic work, then he may become less and less discriminating about where such satisfactions are to be found.

In his final chapter, Houseman quotes Garrick Utley of NBC as saying that "when in his seventies, John Houseman finally found Professor Kingsley—he found himself." Houseman does not mention Professor Kingsley's current incarnation as a TV salesman for McDonald's hamburgers, Smith Barney investments, and Chrysler cars. These are probably annuities for a time (far off, I hope) when he is ready to retire, and Houseman doubtless understands their proper value. But there are signals, nevertheless, that Kingsley is taking over John Houseman's life. The climax of *Final Dress* is an account of the night on which he received his Oscar for *The Paper Chase*. He has dutifully lobbied for the award

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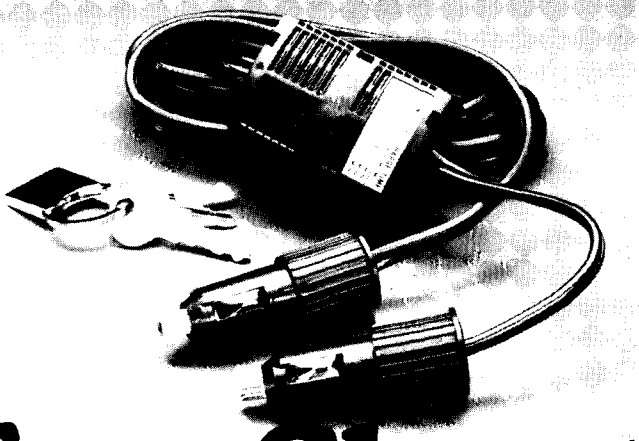

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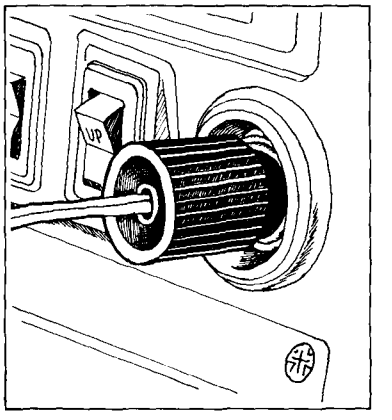

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through interviews and talk shows, and now the precious moment has arrived. Numb with apprehension, he hears the overwhelming applause of the audience ("it can be verified in decibels on the tapes of that night's proceedings"), rises to his feet, and reads his acceptance speech, later feeling "much as the frog must have felt just after he'd been kissed by the king's daughter and turned into a prince."

His creative energy undiminished at the age of eighty-one, Houseman may very well discover many more selves in the remainder of his professional career. But without wishing to deny him his well-deserved rewards and recognition, indeed in order to salute his lifetime of achievement in the theater, I am obliged to say it would be a shame if the last image perceived by all those young people for whom he is a model was of "one of the most sought-after and highly paid aging male performers in the media," measuring the decibel count of his applause, and hugging his gleaming brass statuette.

Money has changed, but not corrupted, our political system.

THE CAMPAIGN REFORM FAILURE

BY ROBERT J. SAMUELSON

THE UNITED STATES invented modern democracy and has practiced it longer and more successfully than any other nation. For all its flaws, it works remarkably well. While mediating among the jumbled interests of a geographically, ethnically, racially, religiously, and economically diverse nation, it has preserved both freedom and stability. When asked about their political leaders, Americans (according to public opinion polls) often hold their noses. But when asked about their political system, they overwhelmingly express intense pride.

Any discussion of money's role in politics needs to start with these fundamentals, because the critics of the status quo do not simply argue that the current system of campaign financing is imperfect. Increasingly, they contend that it menaces the American democratic achievement itself. As Elizabeth Drew concludes in her short book, *Politics and Money*: "We have allowed the basic idea of our democratic process—representative government—to slip away. The only question is whether we are serious about trying to retrieve it."

To advance this argument is to shoulder a heavy burden. It does not suffice to demonstrate that money plays an important and not always healthy role in politics. No one has ever doubted that. Nor does it suffice to show that the current system is flawed. Almost everyone concedes that. The burden that Drew and other reform advocates assume is to persuade that money has attained unprecedented leverage over government behavior. And more: that there are possible reforms that would represent substantial improvements without aggravating current deficiencies or creating new ones.

BOOKS DISCUSSED IN THIS ESSAY

Politics and Money: The New Road to Corruption, by Elizabeth Drew (Macmillan, 156 pp., $11.95)

Financing the 1980 Election, by Herbert E. Alexander (Lexington Books, 544 pp., $34.95)

The argument fails—utterly.

If Drew's is the reformers' best case, then there is no case. The Washington correspondent for *The New Yorker* (where most of this book first appeared), Drew has a reputation as one of Washington's most intelligent and reflective journalists. To judge from much of her work, it is surely deserved. But she has obviously made campaign finance reform a crusade, and this book is less reportage (though it involved considerable interviewing) than polemic. It lacks any balanced view of the influences that move legislation. Drew asserts or implies that money is the prime driving force, even while providing only a few instances where money played a role at all. There is no reference to the substantial amount of scholarship on campaign finance, including Herbert Alexander's comprehensive studies of the last six Presidential elections. Much of the evidence consists of quotations from partisans who agree with Drew or who make sweeping assertions that lack any historical perspective. And virtually none of this commentary is subjected to critical analysis.

There are two reasons, nevertheless, for treating Drew's tract seriously. The first is that it elicits agreement from large numbers of influential people. Many journalists, congressmen, and lawyer-lobbyists—all powerful opinion-makers about Washington—seem to accept that money is corrupting politics. Typical is this prepublication plaudit from *Washington Post* reporter Bob Woodward: "No one else has had the guts or the determination to open up this subject. Brilliant reporting. As a reporter, I am embarrassed I didn't find this story myself."

Even if the "story" is untrue—which it is—its constant repetition gives the appearance of truth and shapes public opinion. Drew's *New Yorker* series is but one example of a general media drumbeat of criticism. (See, for instance, Mark Green's "Political PAC-man," TNR, December 13, 1982.) Played often enough and loud enough, the theme of corruption acquires respectability. It aggravates the very problem the reformers purport to be curing: the

Robert J. Samuelson's weekly column on economic affairs in the *National Journal* also runs in *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, and other newspapers.

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loss of public confidence in elected officials and governmental institutions. The aim, of course, is campaign reform.

And therein lies the second cause for concern. For the logic of campaign reform implies fundamental, not cosmetic, changes. It strikes at a basic constitutional tenet: free speech. If free speech includes the right to seek political influence, it involves the right to spend. The Supreme Court took this position in *Buckley* v. *Valeo* (a 1976 case challenging the 1974 election law), and it is simply common sense. If I am unhappy with my legislator, am I to be prevented from spending money in an effort to convince others of my position? If I want to influence my government, am I to be prevented from spending money to do so? And what more natural way than working to elect people who share my views?

Problems obviously surface. Representative democracy presumes to represent people, not dollars. Moreover, people do not speak only as individuals but also as organized groups—interest groups. And interest groups are unequal in size, wealth, and, usually, influence. This part of the problem is not new. James Madison recognized it years ago. Calling interest groups "factions," he argued that their power would be limited by natural conflicts and the mechanics of government. The division of power among two legislative houses and the executive and judicial branches would require compromise, groups acting "in unison with each other." But if the provisioning of money has now become so vital to politics that Madison's balance is lost, then irreconcilable conflicts arise among traditional values. Either free speech (including free spending) is compromised or the representative nature of democracy is eroded.

Drew is convinced that we have reached this juncture and, therefore, entertains radical revisions in free speech. She argues that we need to "redefine what we mean by 'freedom of speech,' and [to] uncouple 'the marketplace of ideas from the idea of the 'free market.' " In practice, she favors more public financing for campaigns and tighter controls on private campaign spending. Justifying these, she approvingly summarizes an argument made by former Solicitor General Archibald Cox, a chairman of Common Cause who has argued campaign law cases. Cox, she writes,

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

> suggested that one way to deal with the proposition that spending money equals free speech would be to say that there are lots of different kinds of expenditures, and perhaps money is speech in the instance of a person spending money to publish or broadcast his own thoughts, while it is an entirely different thing when an organization raises money from all over the country and spends it to broadcast. The difference, he said, is that the money is collected nationally, and that it is used for much speech but few ideas.

A measure of reformers' obsession is that they have descended to these meaningless and essentially antidemocratic distinctions. Individuals may have a right to "free speech," but organizations (collections of individuals) may have a lesser right. Some speech is good, but speech devoid of "ideas" (whose ideas?) may not be. Organizations locally financed may be more deserving than those nationally financed. Happily, however, we have not reached the juncture that Drew and other reformers suggest. To be sure, the political system is changing—it always is and always has—but the changes have not demolished representative government, including Madison's safeguards.

No one seriously disputes that campaign (as opposed to legislative) politics needs more money than ever before. The critical questions are whether money's new role fundamentally distorts politics and the opportunities for representation and influence.

Depending on the standard of comparison, the amount of money now spent on elections is huge, reasonable, or small. In 1980, it totaled $1.203 billion, according to Alexander. Of this, almost half was spent on federal elections, $275 million for the Presidential campaign, and $239 million for congressional campaigns; the rest went for state and local races. As Alexander points out, the total equals about one-tenth of 1 percent of taxpayer money spent by government in fiscal 1980 ($958.7 billion)—which seems a small price—and only twice the advertising budget of Procter and Gamble ($649 million). On the other hand, campaign spending has outraced inflation and, compared with the recent past, totals are huge. By Alexander's estimates, campaign spending increased by 759 percent between 1952 (when it totaled $140 million) and 1980, while general prices rose only 210 percent; campaign spending increased 183 percent between 1972 (the total: $425 million) and 1980 against a general price rise of 97 percent.

These increases stem from basic

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changes in the political system. Since early in the century, party control over the election process has steadily diminished, and this trend has accelerated sharply since World War II. Party organizations were once almost entirely responsible for the selection of candidates and the running of campaigns. Political competition occurred within the party itself. Candidates fought strenuously for the party endorsement or the support of party chieftains. With the endorsement came huge organizational support—the big city "machines" being the best examples—and the automatic votes of thousands and millions of intense party loyalists.

This system's disintegration is an oft-told story. Central city political machines crumbled before suburbanization and the assimilation of first-generation immigrants for whom the parties provided patronage and a sense of identity. Depression-era political loyalties faded as government embraced the welfare state and the electorate changed. By 1980, two-fifths of the potential electorate was thirty-four or younger—that is, they hadn't been born at the end of World War II. Finally, party organizations lost their legal prerogatives. Beginning early in the century, primaries (the first Presidential primary occurred in Florida in 1904) undermined their ability to control candidate selection.

This turmoil produced a different style of campaign politics. Candidates were increasingly independent operators, shorn of well-oiled party organizations and reliable political loyalties. More voters considered themselves "independents," and the party attachment of nominal Democrats and Republicans weakened. Ticket-splitting increased and so did the importance of ideas and personalities in campaigns. To compete for voters' attention and allegiance, candidates relied increasingly on radio, television, direct mail, and newspapers; advertising now amounts to more than half the cost of most campaigns. To calibrate their media messages, candidates hired campaign consultants and the campaign consultants took opinion polls. All this costs money. Money—and all the things it can buy—has largely substituted for the lost organizational and psychological bases of campaign politics.

AT THE same time, government was involving itself in more aspects of American life. In addition to new social welfare programs, laws were passed affecting the environment, job safety, civil rights, pensions, product safety, and the handicapped. Programs were created to finance highways, mass transit, college buildings (and student loans), housing, scientific research and development, synthetic fuel plants, solar energy, hospitals, public television, and cultural events. Federal spending, as a proportion of the gross national product, rose from less than 4 percent in 1929 to more than 24 percent today; the number of pages in the *Federal Register* jumped from 2,355 in 1936 to 87,012 in 1980. As government became more narrow and detailed, so did interest-group politics. Groups mobilized to maximize the benefits from government programs or to minimize adverse side effects.

So there emerged, on the one hand, politicians needing more money—to respond to the new realities of campaigning—and, on the other, individuals and groups wanting more political influence—to respond to the new realities of government activity. That political contributions and spending began to march upward together is wholly unsurprising. The complexion and complexity of politics changed. Politicians reared under the old system reacted to the new pressures of money with disgust—a disgust amplified in the emotion-charged atmosphere of Watergate and the illegal contributions to the Nixon White House. Congress passed campaign reform laws and produced a crazy quilt of restrictions and practices:

—Individuals can give up to $1,000 to a candidate in each primary and general election. An individual can also give up to $20,000 to a political party and up to $5,000 to individual political action Committees (PACs). All these limits are subject to an overall individual ceiling of $25,000 in gifts annually.

—PACs can contribute $5,000 to a candidate per election, with no overall ceiling. Nor are there limits on how much an individual or group, including PACs, can spend on activities—for example, television advertising—to elect a candidate, as long as the spending (known as "independent expenditures") isn't coordinated with the candidate.

—Congressional candidates can spend as much as they raise, and there are no limits on how much a candidate can spend from personal funds.

—Presidential elections operate under partial public financing. In the primaries, similar individual contribution limits exist, but candidates can qualify for matching federal subsidies if they achieve a specified level of individual giving. Once they accept subsidies, though, they face an overall spending limit, $17.7 million in 1980. In the general election, both candidates are entitled to federal subsidy, and if they accept, they can't spend anything else. In 1980, the payment was $29.4 million each.

The restrictions are so intricate because some of the stricter limits imposed by Congress in its 1974 law were struck down by the Supreme Court—in the *Buckley* v. *Valeo* decision—as violations of the First Amendment. Individual contribution limits were upheld on the grounds that Congress could prevent the appearance of undue influence by contributors on legislators, but, at the same time, the court said that total spending limits—on "independent expenditures" by individuals or total spending by congressional candidates—would impair free speech. But if candidates accepted public funds for their campaigns (they could, of course, refuse), they then subjected themselves to the spending limits imposed by Congress as a condition for receiving the funds. That's why there are limits in Presidential, but not congressional, elections.

Whatever the limits, both Drew and Alexander agree that many are evaded and that the law's spirit is easily subverted. One escape involves "inde-

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pendent expenditures." In 1980, according to Alexander, 105 PACs and thirty-three individuals reported $16.1 million of this spending. Most of that ($13.7 million) was spent in the Presidential primary and general election, with Republicans benefiting from almost all of it. Typically, independent expenditures finance television, radio, or direct-mail advertising. The "New Right" National Conservative Political Action Committee is probably the best known user of independent expenditures.

ALTHOUGH this spending isn't supposed to be coordinated with the candidate, Drew shows that this separation can be—and probably often is—a sham. Anyone wanting to aid a Presidential candidate needs to know the candidate's latest poll results: that is, where the candidate is weak. Drew quotes Lyn Nofziger, the White House's former chief political operative, about how the head of an "independent committee" in 1980 could find out: "I wouldn't have to talk to Bill Casey [Reagan's 1980 campaign director]. I'd have a friend of mine talk to Bill Casey. I wouldn't have any problem getting that done. There's no way in the world that if I'm running an independent campaign I'm not going to get the information I need, or Dick Wirthlin's [the Reagan pollster's] data."

Another easy evasion lies in the states. Federal election laws don't (and constitutionally can't) regulate contributions to state and local parties for state and local elections. But, as Drew contends, the line between local and federal activity is often thin or nonexistent. If the state party registers voters during the year of a federal election, is that local or federal activity? When a local party increases television advertising—knowing a large turnout will help its congressional and senatorial candidates—is that local or federal? Many states (California is one) allow unlimited contributions, so individuals can skirt the restrictions imposed by federal law. The national political parties can then shift their funds to other states. Drew correctly argues that this and the effect of "independent expenditures" mock the legislative intent of the 1974 law to limit spending in Presidential campaigns.

If easily evaded, the laws also have had perverse side effects. One probable consequence is an acceleration of campaign contributions and spending. By limiting individual contributions to candidates, the 1974 law almost certainly diverted giving to PACs. The few (mostly labor) PACs before 1974 had been established to abide by the prohibition, enacted early in the century, against direct campaign contributions from corporate and union treasuries. With separate organizations financed by separate contributions, the labor PACs—the best known is the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s Committee for Political Education (COPE)—skirted the restriction. But the PACs' legal status was ambiguous, and both labor and business—many large firms were terrified by the disclosures of illegal contributions in 1972—wanted their standing codified. The 1974 law did this. PACs subsequently multiplied like rabbits, from six hundred at the end of 1974 to about thirty-four hundred by the end of 1982. This created an entirely new industry of fundraisers. Whereas parties and politicians had been primarily responsible for fundraising before, now there are armies of PAC professionals nurturing whole new markets of contributors. Even considering the restrictions, then, the 1974 law probably raised the level of political contributions.

All this has changed the flavor and sociology of politics. Washington is awash in political fundraisers. Direct mail is a new high art of campaigning. Power has passed from party bosses and fabulously wealthy contributors to the shrewd operatives who can mobilize lots of contributors. To Drew, former Democratic National Chairman Robert Strauss brags: "There hasn't been anyone who can reach rich people the way I can." But the serious questions about money's effects on politics lie elsewhere. Drew knows the questions, but answers them with lax standards of evidence and logic.

ONE CLEAR question is whether money systematically and permanently distorts elections. One difficulty in answering this is that no one can easily say what constitutes distortion. Elections can be free and fair without being equal. In fact, they are rarely equal. And money is only one factor—and not always the most important factor—promoting inequality. Districts are often deliberately rigged to favor one party or the other. Well-known incumbents—with access to government contracts and power—face unknown chal-

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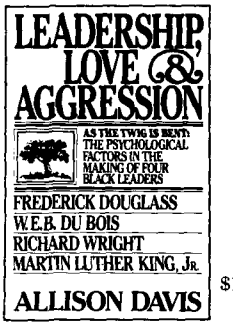
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lengers. Some candidates enjoy more party or interest group support; some candidates have a better press. Unequal contributions may sometimes offset other sources of inequality: for example, an incumbent's better name recognition. In the end, the voters still decide.

But, with money becoming more important, a showing that one party could clearly outraise and outspend the other, say by a margin of 3 or 4 to 1, would create serious doubts about whether the system is working as intended. This, however, is simply not the case. In 1982, Democratic candidates in House elections raised an estimated $93.9 million, Republicans $90.9 million; in the Senate, Democrats raised $62.2 million, and Republicans $54.7 million. Since 1976, Democrats have outraised Republicans in three of four House elections and three of four Senate elections. But, generally, the differences have not been huge. (These figures exclude spending by candidates defeated in primaries, and the preliminary 1982 figures will probably be revised slightly downward later.)

Balance, of course, does not characterize all individual contests. But although money can sometimes be decisive, it clearly isn't the only thing that is decisive. In last year's congressional election, twenty-nine House incumbents (twenty-seven of them Republicans) were defeated. In twenty-one of those races, the winning candidate spent less than the loser. On the Senate side, winning candidates spent more than losers in twenty-four of thirty-three contests. But, in many close contests, the results were mixed. There were three open seats (California, New Jersey, and Virginia). All were won by the candidate who spent the most. On the other hand, two challengers won (those in Nevada and New Mexico) and both were outspent by the incumbent losers.

WHAT this signifies is that, for all the hoopla about advertising, consultants, and polling, campaigns haven't yet deteriorated into scientifically programed combats where victory goes to the candidate with the largest war chest. Challengers almost certainly need to attain at least a high-spending threshold to offset incumbents' name recognition; in almost all the 1982 races where Republican incumbents lost, their opponents' spending exceeded the Democratic average ($216,000). But once the threshold is passed, extra dollars don't necessarily guarantee extra votes; diminishing (even negative) returns can easily set in. Campaigns are usually crazy. Mistakes are made, money is wasted. Incumbents' reputations count heavily, but so does the national political mood. If money has changed campaign politics, it has hardly destroyed democracy.

GRANTING THIS, it's still possible that the sources of campaign money have become so skewed that legislative politics is corrupted. Votes may not be bought and sold at the ballot box, but on the floor of Congress. Because this is the core of Drew's case, you might reasonably expect her to devote the bulk of her book to its documentation. Not so. A relatively small part (perhaps 10 to 15 percent) of the book concerns itself with the allegedly decisive role money played in legislative outcomes. More to the point, campaign contributions alone hardly dictated the results.

Like most campaign reformers, Drew is most agitated by the rise of PACs, especially business and trade association PACs. It's true that these PACs have assumed a larger share of total campaign financing. But this is partially the doing of the campaign reform law itself. Aside from legitimizing PACs, it also restricted, probably unintentionally, even modest individual giving. Between 1974 and 1982, prices roughly doubled, meaning that 1974's $1,000 contribution was worth only about $500 in 1982. This almost certainly made it more essential for Congressmen to accept money from PACs and more attractive for politically active individuals to give to them.

Even so, PACs' total share of campaign funds has probably not risen as quickly as commonly assumed. Individual fundraising still accounts for the lion's share of congressional funds. In 1982, PACs accounted for about 29.3 percent of the total for *winning* candidates, up from 22 percent in 1976. In the House, the proportion rose from 25.6 percent to 34.2 percent; the comparable Senate figures were 14.8 percent in 1976 and 21.9 percent in 1982. And even these figures do not imply anything about legislative influence, because PACs are remarkably diversified. They come in all sizes, shapes, and flavors. In 1980, corporate PACs accounted for about a third of the total and labor PACs for about a quarter; but there were also PACs from trade associations (also about a quarter), PACs set up by independent political groups, agricultural cooperatives, and members of Congress (including Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives). In total, Democratic candidates received slightly more from PACs than Republicans—$42.8 million against $36.4 million—because labor PACs favored Democrats by an 18 to 1 margin.

THE ACID TEST lies in legislation. What happens in Congress? An example of Drew's tunnel analysis involves oil provisions in the massive 1981 tax cut. As she portrays it, these resulted primarily from a "bidding war" for oil campaign contributions. Although the original White House tax bill contained a small pro-oil section, the Democrats sweetened it considerably. They hoped, Drew says, to reclaim their share of oil money, which she says had shifted heavily to the Republicans. The Republicans retaliated by sweetening the proposal even further. When the bidding was over, the bill contained tax relief, rising to $3.6 billion in fiscal 1986, for oil interests. Thus, money moves legislation.

There was indeed a bidding war, but of a different sort: over votes more than contributions. At the time, the House was torn between White House and Democratic tax bills. Both contained significant individual and business cuts, although the amounts and the distributions differed. The real question was power: could the Democrats control the House, where they were nominally the majority party? Once the House leadership decided it wanted a Democratic bill at all costs, the swing Congressmen who would determine the bill's fate acquired enormous bargaining power. And this group—consisting heavily of conservative Democrats, quickly labeled "Boll Weevils," and including many from oil states—used its power accordingly.

Of the forty-eight Democrats who ultimately voted for the Reagan tax bill (the Republicans ultimately prevailed), twelve came from Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. In 1980, these three states accounted for 61 percent of U.S. oil production. Although Drew discusses the bill as if it benefited only oil producers, much of the tax relief went to royalty owners, who own land on which oil is produced for a fee (usually

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12.5 percent). Estimates of royalty owners vary from five hundred thousand to 2.5 million—the smaller number is probably more accurate—but they're concentrated in oil-producing states. As one Hill staffer puts it: "Oil filters down throughout the whole district. Even people who don't have a direct interest in oil have an indirect interest, because of its economic importance. You get a political orientation that is pro-oil." But had the Democratic leadership contested the White House tax proposal with a philosophical alternative—conceding tactical defeat, instead of being bludgeoned into submission—the Boll Weevils would never have acquired negotiating leverage.

An even more important omission mars Drew's account. No one denies that independent oil producers have long used campaign contributions to further their own ends. But if anything, their influence was waning in the 1970s. For most of the decade, the government controlled domestic oil prices and prevented producers from reaping most benefits of higher world oil prices. When controls were finally removed—having been opposed by most economists and by Europe and Japan, which saw low prices feeding America's oil gluttony—Congress limited producers' gains by imposing a windfall-profits tax in 1980. The entire 1981 struggle was to lighten, not eliminate, provisions of the windfall tax. The independent producers and royalty owners were fighting a rearguard action. They did influence policy—but only at the margin. In the 1981 tax bill, the oil provisions accounted for 1.5 percent of the total estimated revenue loss.

Most of Drew's other examples founder on similar complications. She cites the efforts of the American Medical Association to have Congress prevent the Federal Trade Commission from reviewing potentially price-fixing practices of professional associations. But, as Drew offhandedly notes, the A.M.A. proposal failed. She cites an effort by maritime interests to have more oil transported in American vessels. But that failed, too. She cites passage (also as part of the 1981 tax law) of the All Savers Certificate for savings and loans associations, a scheme she rightly describes as ill conceived. But its approval stemmed not so much from campaign contributions as other factors: first, the identification of the savings industry with housing; and second, widespread fears that, if the industry wasn't helped, numerous bankruptcies would result. In case after case, the actual story is more complicated than Drew's story.

Her list also omits most major issues: Social Security, defense policy, Medicare and medical costs, overall economic management. No one has yet seriously contended that campaign contributions dominate policies in these areas, though surely "special interests" are involved. The issues are simply too entangled in popular passions, prejudices, and conflicting political philosophies. Individual defense projects may subsist on vested interests—nothing new—but overall defense spending clearly reflects other pressures.

Far from being "brilliant" journalism, Drew's reporting is precisely the kind that young reporters ought to be warned away from vigorously. It involves selective and misleading use of evidence, an overreliance on self-serving quotes, and an absence of critical analysis. She approvingly quotes a favorite one-liner by Senator Robert

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Dole, Republican of Kansas: "There aren't any Poor PACs, or Food Stamp PACs or Nutrition PACs or Medicare PACs." But, of course, there is a food stamp program, a Medicare program, and a substantial array of welfare programs. They were enacted because they were thought to be good ideas and, even if recently trimmed, they survive because people still believe them to be good ideas and because they have substantial constituencies.

Just because moneyed interests swarm all over Capitol Hill (and they do) does not mean that money rules the roost. In fact, PACs tend to check each other. When one interest organizes a PAC, competing interests do likewise. Even then, there are other checks on their power. One is the spotlight of public attention focused by the press, groups like Common Cause, and other politicians. Another is the obstacle course of enacting any legislation. American democracy is still working to accommodate conflicting interests and ideals. It is not perfect, but the Madisonian mechanisms have survived.

A CHARITABLE observer might convict Drew and fellow reformers of nothing more than sloppy analysis. Like Drew, most reformers are intelligent and well intentioned. Their numbers include energetic and reflective younger members of Congress. Nor is their unease and outrage difficult to understand. Their analysis springs from their nerve endings. Just as some people dislike fast-food restaurants, they detest the taste and feel of the new politics. Drew does not like Washington's nightly fundraisers. She thinks it demeaning, degrading, and distracting that elected representatives spend their time dealing with anything so crass as money. She abhors the lobbyists infesting Capitol Hill with their wads of PAC funds. It simply offends her sensibilities.

But this distaste produces a mentality far more threatening to the national political tradition than the sins of campaign finances. The attempt to deny money's new place in politics is futile—just as it was futile to deny the emergence of big city machines—but the effort entails heavy costs. The most obvious is the smothering of campaigns in bureaucratic tedium. Alexander drily observes that federal election law increasingly resembles the tax law, with the Federal Election Commission "doing for politics what the Internal Revenue Service does for taxes." This, he notes, "increases the need for professionals—accountants, lawyers and other skilled individuals—to help candidates" comply with complex regulations, and it may "chill enthusiasm for citizen participation . . . since nonknowledgeable amateurs may easily violate the law."

A MORE SERIOUS defect is to undermine the moral authority of political leaders and the political process. If one lesson emerges clearly from Drew's account, it is the impossibility of enacting campaign reform laws that will not be speedily subverted. The ease with which the limits on Presidential spending were evaded—via "independent expenditures" and state party spending—underscores that. Because politics now increasingly requires spending (as opposed to volunteer efforts or organizational commitment), legislated restrictions invite circumvention. If spending through one channel is curtailed, it will simply pop up—with some delay and difficulty, perhaps—elsewhere. The capping of individual contributions and the skyrocketing of PAC spending is but one example.

To enact laws whose failure can be predicted is an act of extreme political and legal irresponsibility. It means government creates unrealistic and unmaintainable moral standards. Candidates and political professionals are immediately thrust into unavoidably compromising positions. They can strictly abide by the letter and spirit of the law—an act of high virtue and possibly political suicide. Or they can examine the law to see how it can be stretched, twisted, and avoided. Perhaps, in the first flush of reform, virtue prevails. But as time passes and evasions become more widespread, the taboos against them diminish and the necessity of conforming increases. The participants in this process become steeped in either cynicism or guilt. When the public recognizes the gap between enacted standards of behavior and actual practices, esteem for elected officials suffers. Reformers fan the disillusion, declaring politics "corrupt" and proclaiming they are trying to reestablish the government's moral authority. Actually, they are unwittingly destroying it.

In practice, reform risks enactment of politically self-serving or destructive legislation. Current proposals follow two strands: limits on campaign spending, and public financing of congressional elections. If you are an incumbent, you have an obvious interest in spending limits. This is not immediately apparent, because, on average, incumbents have traditionally raised and spent more than challengers. For incumbents to create a limit, then, seems a self-imposed handicap. But average results are not what matter. In most congressional elections, only a portion of the races (typically, many fewer than half) are genuinely competitive, involving either open seats or vulnerable incumbents. In these races, extra spending is one way—but not the only way—that a challenger might actually win. To choke off this possibility is to provide incumbents with extra insurance in a game where they already are overwhelming favorites. In recent elections, roughly nine of ten House members and seven of ten Senators seeking reelection actually have won.

THE OTHER extreme solution—barring private campaign spending and relying on public financing—runs an opposite danger. It subsidizes challengers, penalizes incumbents, and, therefore, risks unsettling the process of legislating. By trying to equalize spending, it deprives the incumbent of advantages—support by satisfied constituents, pleased interest groups—that a conscientious representative might reasonably expect. At the same time, it makes challenging more attractive by removing one large obstacle: fundraising. And, finally, it enhances the challengers' prospects of victory. No one can say whether more challengers would actually win, but, almost certainly, incumbents would become more obsessed—if that is possible—with electioneering as opposed to legislating. Inevitably, Congressmen would seek to win the loyalty of groups that might finance independent election efforts on their behalf. This suggests new levels of sham, exertion, and influence brokering. Drew, among others, seems concerned that the current system of campaign finance claims too much of a representative's time and psychic energy. But public financing is likely to mean less continuity, reflection, and independence in government, not more.

The major proposals now being advanced mix these extreme alternatives

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in ways that are so complicated that they are not worth describing. But all seem vulnerable to precisely the sort of evasions that have characterized their predecessors. One common proposal is to limit the amount of contributions a candidate could accept from PACs to, say, $90,000 for House candidates. It is not clear, of course, whether this would limit the influence of individual PACs. Suppose, for example, that I am on the banking committee and have received money from banking PACs. Suppose, then, that PACs for brokerage houses (whose interests often conflict with banks') want to contribute but I have already reached my limit. When my committee considers legislation affecting both banks and brokers, am I more or less beholden to banks than if I had accepted contributions from both sets of PACs? In any case, PAC restrictions seem likely to spur other campaign activities on the part of spurned groups. The most obvious are greater "independent expenditures" or more contributions to state parties.

COPING with these contradictions risks intruding on free speech, a subject Drew treats casually. At some points, she ambiguously suggests limits on political groups that, simply put, she just doesn't like. For example, she deplores the activities of the National Conservative Political Action Committee and the Congressional Club, a PAC maintained by Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina. The massive activities of these groups, she argues, go "beyond political expression . . . they manipulate people's desire for political expression, and in a way that deliberately distorts the issues." These groups, she says, "are not the same as grass-roots movements that form around an issue. These committees are highly skilled, directed organizations that use people's feelings about certain issues to gain influence."

This is a mind-boggling train of thought. NCPAC and the Congressional Club differ from "grass-roots movements that form around an issue," yet they "use people's feelings about certain issues to gain influence." Can anyone make sense of that? To follow Drew's thinking to its logical conclusion is to suggest rules for restricting what she believes is demagoguery (as opposed to legitimate political expression) and inappropriate "highly skilled, directed organizations" (as opposed to appropriate "grass-roots" groups). Somehow, one suspects, these are distinctions never contemplated by the Founding Fathers.

Ultimately, the cause of reforming campaign finances leads to dead ends because it clings to a primitive, unrealistic, and even undesirable view of representative government. "Special interests" is one of those over-used phrases that is simultaneously descriptive and deceptive. It is descriptive in the sense that the interests of these groups are usually narrow and often selfish. It is deceptive in the pejorative implication that the term naturally carries. The burden—and the glory, too—of modern American democracy is the proliferation of these groups. Their expansion is the natural result of the post-Depression growth of government spending and authority. If democracy is people's right to be heard on issues that engage their interests and emotions, then government's growth could have had no other effect. Because government interferes more, it is interfered with more. Because the nature of its intervention has become more narrow and detailed, so has the nature of the political reaction.

The inevitability of special interests and their political activism underlines the permanent importance of one campaign reform enacted in the early 1970s: disclosure of election contributions. Secret free speech is an illogical and almost comical concept. The disclosure of contributions not only exposes the motives of politicians to public scrutiny but also enables competing interests to mobilize. But, otherwise, most campaign reforms represent a futile effort to reverse irreversible trends. Supposing, against all logic, that the campaign activities of "special interests" could be curbed, would that end the problem? Of course not. It would simply intensify Washington lobbying and grass-roots campaigns to influence specific decisions. Banks' successful effort to repeal the withholding of interest and dividends may be a forerunner of this sort of effort.

More important, the prejudice against special interests strikes at the heart of the democratic process. One person's special interest is another's crusade. The function of politics is not only to govern in the general interest and to reconcile differences among specific interests; it is also to provide outlets for political and social tensions. People often accept governmental outcomes with which they disagree if they feel they had a chance to influence the process. In a nation as diverse as the United States, it is unhealthy to place too many restrictions on these outlets. The risk is making people believe that government is even more inaccessible and unresponsive than they already do.

No one, of course, should pretend the resulting system is problem-free. It isn't. The growth of government authority and political activism has led to severe tensions, most obvious to Congressmen. They are overburdened with work, confronted with more issues than they can possibly master, pestered by

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more constituencies than can possibly be satisfied, and—given the certainty of disappointed suitors—presented with the constant threat of organized opposition to their reelection. Within Congress, the multiplication of government programs and interest groups has made the creation of enduring coalitions more difficult. Combined with other changes—declining party loyalty, the weakening of parties and (within Congress) committee chairmen, the fading of Depression-era attitudes—these shifts have made politics more difficult and less secure. Power has been fragmented or, in Drew's word, splintered. At the same time, powerful and often contradictory popular expectations of government performance have emerged concerning everything from Social Security to the environment.

The convergence of these trends—the diffusion of power and increased public demands—accounts for much of government's floundering and failure over the past decade. On the one hand, government faces paralysis: a collision of competing interests so severe that nothing happens. (In late 1982, one Congressman described Congress's inability to revise the Clean Air Act to Drew this way: "The stalemate has been caused 50 percent by industry and 50 percent by environmentalists. Congressmen on the committee say, 'Hey, do we really have to act on this this year?' ") On the other hand, there looms the sort of pervasive contradiction that compels government to act in ways that are ultimately self-defeating. The clearest illustration is the tax system: the proliferation of special tax provisions has reduced public confidence in the system, while simultaneously spurring new demands for more special relief which, once enacted, further erode public confidence.

The picture can be dispiriting. In part it reflects the inability of political leaders—of both parties—to find new themes that cut across the special interests of individuals, groups, and corporations and provide a new basis for building coalitions. This is the ongoing drama of government, but it should not be mislabeled. The system is struggling, but it is not corrupt.

AN UNCOMMON MYSTERY

The Name of the Rose
by Umberto Eco
translated by William Weaver

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 502 pp., $15.95)

There are two mysteries connected with Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*. One comprises the bulk of the plot and involves a trail of murdered monks in a fourteenth-century Italian monastery; the other has to do with the book's sudden explosive celebrity. Are there really that many intrepid readers out there? It's an exalting thought. To be sure, the demand for good Whodunits never slackens, and this one reads—in its Whodunit parts—like vintage Doyle, with esoteric clues, strange reversals, and an engagingly empirical sleuth, Brother William of Baskerville (!). But this rose is a many-petaled contraption, as much history as mystery. And the history portion, studded with ecclesiastical lore, Latin tags, learned discussions on heresy and the interpretation of writ, is demanding. What's more, the whole has an ulterior life as a meditation on the meaning and nature of signs. Chic it may be, easy beach-blanket reading it is not. Nevertheless, the prospect of an intricate solution can exert a powerful magnetic effect on readers' minds, and Eco's solution is as intricate as an Egyptian stamp. The more minds he can inveigle into his subtle net, the better. For there are other mysteries well worth pondering in these pages.

Eco is professor of semiotics at the University of Bologna. Before the publication of *The Name of the Rose*, he was known mainly in scholarly circles as the author of *A Theory of Semiotics* (1976) and *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (1979), forbidding tracts that are not about to be elucidated here. Semiotics, in its most general sense, is the science of signs, and, as clues are nothing more or less than signs, there is a natural affinity between the discipline and the mystery genre—which Eco, naturally, exploits to the full. But the matter is quite complex. As Baskerville at one point explains to Adso, his assistant (the name cleverly echoes "Watson") and eventual recording angel (for these are Adso's memoirs, set down half a century after the events):

> The print does not always have the same shape as the body that impressed it, and it doesn't always derive from the pressure of a body. At times it reproduces the impression a body has left in our mind: it is the print of an idea.

THIS IS essential. Through signs the world of ideas is established as continuous with the material world, and word and deed are seen as equally consequential. A copy of the second book of Aristotle's *Poetics*, presumed lost, becomes an object worth killing for—not for its scarcity, but because its contents may be interpreted in a most inappropriate way. Bibliomania figures here in all of its permutations. Indeed, even Adso's memoir is presented as a "found" text of dubious provenance. Eco, in a straight-faced preface, details his own unsuccessful attempts to trace the history of the document. He suggests that there has been an ongoing conspiracy to suppress Adso of Melk. How else to explain a trail that opens onto a void at every turn? Before Adso ever begins his narrative the potency of words has been underscored. And when he does begin, we read: "In the beginning was the Word. . .," the ultimate sense of which locates all material origin in the sign.

The year is 1327. The monks of the not-to-be-named monastery are in a furor. The Antichrist is come! One monk's body has been found at the foot of a

COMING:

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cliff, another's has been stuck head down in a vat of pigs' blood. Baskerville, on hand to mediate a parley between envoys of Pope John XII (who is in Avignon) and an entourage of dissenting Franciscan Minorites, is asked to press his deductive abilities into service. Baskerville can no more refuse a mental challenge than Holmes could. He sets to work instantly to disentangle the widely flung net of possible causes and effects. And, as the monastery is one of the foremost centers of learning of the time, the clues soon direct him to the library and the texts housed in its labyrinthine arrangement of rooms—their plan adapted from Borges's descriptions of the library at Babel.

Baskerville is a monk of the new dispensation. He worships reason and believes in God because God planted reason in man. He is, like his mentor Roger Bacon and his friend William of Occam, a herald of Renaissance energies and ideas: he speaks of the possibility of flying machines, and he astounds the other monks when he clips two oblongs of glass over the bridge of his nose in order to read. As detective, he follows a principle that Vico will proclaim three centuries later—that man can understand what man himself has wrought. Naturally, he is an anomaly. The monastery and the world at large are still steeped in the sense of *mysterium tremens*. As Adso declares at the beginning of his narrative:

> But we see now through a glass darkly, and the truth, before it is revealed to all, face to face, we see in fragments (alas, how illegible) in the error of the world, so we must spell out its faithful signals even when they seem obscure to us and as if amalgamated with a will bent wholly on evil.

Obviously, Baskerville will have two kinds of signs to consider, those bound by cause and legible to reason, and those created into the fabric of the world (or imprinted in zealous minds) by God, the interpretation of which is tricky even for the semioticians of the church. Eco has great sport mixing the two, and the pattern that Baskerville finally uncovers is most unempirical: the murders appear to be symbolically linked to the opening of the seals in the Apocalypse of John.

Eco's learning is prodigious. Fortunately, it does not interfere with his keen satiric sense; if anything, it supplies him with targets. The parley between the Pope's charges and the Minorites is, for instance, a comic *tour de force*. We might call it a clash between styles of interpretation. At issue is the poverty of Christ, whether or not He and His disciples owned their goods or had them *usus facti*, in use alone. A small point on the face of it, but one that might determine which way heresy lies, and thus might have larger application to the fate of the Church. Each faction puts its keenest men on the rostrum and a hermeneutic fireworks ensues. There is wit enough on either side to reverse any proposition, and then reverse the reverse, until it is obvious to all that black is white and up is down. At which point the solemn friars resort to the ultimate logic—they charge at each other with fists flailing. So much for the semioticians of the church.

But Eco is not entirely lenient with brilliant Baskerville either. Though he finally does solve the murders, his success is made to depend as much upon serendipity as cerebration. As often as not it is some fumble by Adso that gets him over a hurdle that reason alone cannot clear. Holmes demystifies the world entirely; Baskerville runs reason to the end of its tether and then has a pratfall. Near the end of the book we find him complaining to Adso: "I have never doubted the truth of signs. . . . they are the only things man has with which to orient himself in the world. What I did not understand was the relation among signs." I leave it to the reader to discover what these signs are and what bizarre pattern they finally sketch.

The Name of the Rose is a first-class mystery, but it does have higher claims as well. Eco asserts these by using the genre itself as a trope: the mystery is a figure for all epistemological questioning—how do we know things, what can we know? Tale and higher concern have been stitched together so artfully that we are hard put to spot a seam. But here we come to an unfortunate paradox, for in the process of stitching these "higher concerns" together with the exigencies of a Whodunit, Eco has also undermined himself. For the tension of gradual disclosure, which is the mainspring of mystery narrative, exhausts itself once and for all (barring the reader's memory lapse) in the first reading. Though intricate and challenging on many levels, *The Name of the Rose* is a hard book to return to. Certainly it cannot be read in the same way a second time. The plot machinery prohibits it: once the causal chain is known, the links stand out in greater relief. Nor are the characterizations strong enough to take up the slack. With the exception of Adso, who is a wonderfully fresh and ingenious narrator, the figures are cleverly done cutouts. Even Baskerville is, in the last analysis, Holmes redivivus.

WALKING ALONE IN LATE WINTER

How long the winter has lasted—like a Mahler
symphony, or an hour in the dentist's chair.
In the fields the grasses are matted
and gray, making me think of June, when hay
and vetch burgeon in the heat, and warm rain
swells the globed buds of the peony.

Ice on the pond breaks into huge planes. One
sticks like a barge gone awry at the neck
of the bridge. . . . The reeds
and shrubby brush along the shore
gleam with ice that shatters when the breeze
moves them. From beyond the bog
the sound of water rushing over trees
felled by the zealous beavers,
who bring them crashing down. Sometimes
it seems they do it just for fun. . . .

Those days of anger and remorse
come back to me; you fidgeting with your ring,
sliding it off, then jabbing it on again.

The wind is keen coming over the ice;
it carries the sound of breaking glass.
And the sun, bright but not warm,
has gone behind the hill. Chill, or the fear
of chill, sends me hurrying home.

JANE KENYON

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Still, something of importance does survive after the mainspring is spent. Eco has set into motion—fantastical though that motion may be—a piece of old tapestry. And this in itself may draw us back for a second look. Besides learning something about the intellectual and spiritual passions of fourteenth-century Europe, we glean all manner of details about the workings of scriptoria, the symbolism of gems, herb cultivation, and truffle hunting. And Eco has registered with great art the fevers and anxieties of a world on the very edge of transformation. Monastic life has had its hour on the stage; the first prototype flying machines are little more than a century away. The powerful determining forces of history have been drawn down into the close circuitry of the abbey on the mountain top.

Eco seems to have anticipated the problematic second-life status of his book. As Adso and Baskerville are about to leave the monastery, the latter announces:

> The order that the mind imagines is like a net, or like a ladder, built to attain something. But afterward you must throw the ladder away, because you discover that, even if it was useful, it was meaningless. *Er muoz gelî chesame die lieter abwerfen, sô er an ir ufgestigen. . . .*

"Who told you that?" Adso inquires. To which Baskerville replies: "A mystic from your land." The mystic was, or is, or will be, Ludwig Wittgenstein. The German is a close paraphrase of Proposition 6.54 of the *Tractatus*, published almost six hundred years later. If Eco's constructed ladder is not as useful as Wittgenstein's, it nevertheless should not be thrown away. Even renegotiating it, the mind is moved from word to world and back, covering in the process more than a few ells.

SVEN BIRKERTS

Sven Birkerts has essays forthcoming in *The Michigan Quarterly Review*, *The Agni Review*, and *The Iowa Review*.

THE CRITIC AS SCOURGE

The Air-Line to Seattle: Studies in Literary and Historical Writing about America by Kenneth Lynn

(University of Chicago Press, 228 pp., $17.50)

The provocative title of this collection of pieces by Kenneth Lynn, professor of history at Johns Hopkins and a frequent commentator on American literary and historical figures, is of a piece with the provocations found throughout the volume. In previously published books on the American "business" novel or on Mark Twain's humor, as well as in his excellent, measured biography of William Dean Howells, Mr. Lynn largely eschewed the role of polemicist. More recently, as a reviewer in the pages of *Commentary* and *The American Scholar*, he has become pugnacious and very much on the offensive, his mission being, as he sees it, to challenge and correct "the professoriat" whose "hermetic mentality" and whose belief in the superiority of intellectuals to ordinary folk has "initiated a whole new scholarship about American civilization." Lynn's strategy is, in the title essay from which these phrases are taken, to ally himself with George Santayana, who at the beginning of this century wrote and recited (at a Harvard Signet Club dinner) a satirical poem called "Young Sammy's First Wild Oats." This poem mocked the insularity of Harvard Yard and its academics who, even though they managed to "shut the mucker-village out"

> Yet the smoke of trade and battle
> Cannot quite be banished hence,
> And the air-line to Seattle
> Whizzes just behind the fence.

Mr. Lynn aims to show that today's professoriat is really a continuation of the genteel tradition Santayana poked fun at.

Inasmuch as the opening essay is labeled a "prologue," the expectation is that there will follow a series of instances of depredations uncovered by Mr. Lynn in his considerations of recent phenomena like the following: Garry Wills's "falsifying" of Jefferson, in *Inventing America*; Malcolm Cowley's laundering of his fellow-traveling clothes in his memoir about the 1930s; Justin Kaplan's too-easy acceptance of Whitman's homosexuality as, in our enlightened age, not worth making a fuss about, and thus ignoring the cost of it to Whitman's guilty conscience; the "regressive" tendencies displayed by American historians of politics and literature such as Bernard Bailyn, Leo Marx, Eugene Genovese; the historical unreliability of Mary Chestnut's Civil War "diary," the second version of which (Lynn argues) is instead a novelized view of things written well after the events; the tendency among academic critics of *Huckleberry Finn* to read it solemnly and literal-mindedly, finding in it a condemnation of American life that Mark Twain himself did not formulate—the "dropouts-ville" syndrome, as Lynn calls it.

Each of these issues is well worth an argument and the prosecutor attacks them with vigor. Yet, after his altogether sensible remarks about the dangers of reading the early chapters of Twain's novel about Huck's life at the Widow Douglas's as if they were a richly symbolic statement about the constrictions of American life rather than a convenient pretext to get the real action off the ground, Mr. Lynn is compelled to a rich statement of his own which sounds as if it bears out the theme of the collection:

> The habitual tendency of American intellectuals to view family life as dreary, repressive, and conducive to the sickness rather than the health, of husbands and wives, parents and children, has also figured in the critical distortion of the novel, as has the anti-Americanism that has been a part of campus life ever since the mid-1960s.

As someone who has spent a class or two mocking the certainties of that non-American intellectual R. D. Laing about the evils of family life, I'm sympathetic with Lynn up to a point. But I become restive when I'm asked to couple family-baiting with America-hating, and locate them as the "habitual tendency" of our academic genteel tradition. And I become further restive when the next and concluding paragraph to the essay tells me that the first

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woman ever to run the *Harvard Crimson* later announced she was planning to "drop out" of American society, just like Huck Finn: "She had learned her classroom lesson well, that young woman," breathes Lynn with breath well bated. Are we meant to growl agreement in righteous indignation at all those American intellectuals—soft on *Huckleberry Finn*, hard on the family and on Vietnam—who have led our promising children into such a plight?

THE BOOK'S prologue promises more than it performs in its attempt to show up the American professoriat, all of whose members are going in the opposite direction from Mr. Lynn. But it is not only members of the professoriat who receive his relentless, and pretty much unforgiving, scrutiny. By which I mean that he turns out to be as superior to "creative" writers—like Emerson, Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald—as he is to mere professors. Emerson—as his biographers have refused to see, argues Lynn—married into a comfortable financial situation and only after his first wife died and left him well fixed for life did he leave the Unitarian church and write "The American Scholar," in which young men were urged to spurn material values. (This essay is a "holy text," Lynn insists, for intellectuals, all of whom believe they are morally superior to material values.) And if Emerson was a hypocrite, Hemingway was, to the end, a mama's boy; while Fitzgerald (the occasion for Lynn's essay on him is Matthew Bruccoli's biography—an "awful book," an "aesthetic disaster") identified with "passive, pleading creatures like Gatsby" and was, in the final crushing words of Lynn's review, "as inhibited as any Puritan." In other words there is a tendency in these pieces to see through not only the historian or biographer—unable accurately or truthfully to tell us about the real Max Perkins or Walter Lippmann—but to see through Perkins or Lippmann (or Emerson, or Hemingway, or Fitzgerald) themselves for the imperfect, self-deluding creatures they turned out to be. Never is Mr. Lynn of two minds about any call he makes.

On the other hand—and it is a real virtue—he does make the calls, as he sees them, if not as they necessarily are. One doesn't have to accede to the theory about Hemingway and his mum to be wholly in accord with Mr. Lynn's demolishing of the habit of reading his stories and novels (à la Philip Young) as if they exhibited, again and yet again, "psychic malaise" (the famous "wound") and as if by pointing that out one had gotten to the heart of anything. Lynn's remarks about Whitman and Twain seem to me wholly pertinent; while his brisk portraits of assorted figures (in the essay, "The Rebels of Greenwich Village") show a fine biographical flair, an ability to sum up and set forth, sharply and vividly. In fact, and perhaps I have been overly reluctant to come out with it, Lynn is fun to read, the brisk pointedness of his style issuing from, so it appears, his sense of righteous urgency. Only after he is galled by some inexcusable crime does he come forward to speak the truth, set the record right.

OR RATHER, perhaps, to cause some trouble and—more or less sensationally—name some names. In abusing Malcolm Cowley's memoir for its suppressions, Lynn takes the opportunity to make passing swipes at distinguished Americanists named R. W. B. Lewis, Alfred Kazin, and Daniel Aaron. Indeed he is not above name-calling. In a 1977 review of Richard Poirier's book on Frost (not included here) he referred to its author as "Trendy Dick," while providing an absurdly one-sided, reductively hostile view of a first-rate book. Nor is he above the occasional leer, when engaged, say, in attacking guardians of F.D.R.'s memory like Arthur Schlesinger, whom Lynn accuses of examining the relationship between Roosevelt and Lucy Mercer only from *their* point of view, not from Eleanor's. So in "The First Lady's First Friend," a review of Doris Faber's life of Lorena Hickock, Lynn indulges in the following fantasy:

> ("Oh, Arthur," I seem to hear Lorena Hickock saying, as she looks up from her copy of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, "if only you knew what Eleanor and I were doing during those inaugural days when Franklin had the audacity to have Lucy Mercer at his side!")

Cute? But the chortling is all Mr. Lynn's, not Lorena Hickock's.

So this lively and most attractively packaged collection (although the jacket cover has a locomotive on it rather than an airplane) has the cumulative effect of seeming too heroically virtuous to be true. Lynn takes on one comer after another, always knocks them out cold, is never for a moment hesitant about any point he makes. For his real point is to win, and to show by this continuous victory that there is at least one member of the American professoriat who is not a flabby left-liberal, one intellectual who is no effete, genteel whiner but a man of muscle, unillusioned, of unerring sight and insight. Even Santayana was less insistently triumphant in his battles with the winds of doctrine.

WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

William H. Pritchard teaches English at Amherst and is the author of *Lives of the Modern Poets* (Oxford University Press).

TRB, *from page 6*

uty military attaché *was* inside the national palace with a walkie-talkie during the coup, "but was not involved." And he described the session on the *Ranger* as "a courtesy visit." The United States "had no prior knowledge of the coup," he said. Another historic first, as Richard Nixon would have noted.

The attaché, it turns out, went to the palace after hearing reports of unusual activity, and carried a walkie-talkie in order to report to the Embassy. We all know how unreliable the phone system is in these less developed countries. "There was nothing unusual in his actions," said the State Department spokesman, adding, "He was not directing the coup." That is what the lawyers call a "negative pregnant," a statement that denies more than is alleged.

But these are hot days, and the tempo of life is more relaxed. The events in Chad didn't prompt a call for the return of Congress, even though the President proclaimed an American interest, and Mr. Reagan himself proceeded placidly on his way, wooing Hispanic-American voters and meeting with the President of Mexico. Some who don't know what to believe think it might be useful to work out an exchange program between the French foreign minister and the State Department spokesman. In Washington, the best advice in the summer is to believe nothing—or, better yet, believe everything. As Tom T. Hall once sang, "If you hang them all, you'll get the guilty."

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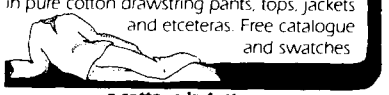

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SPAIN DIARIST

Michener ¡Olé!

JAMES MICHENER'S *Iberia* was written fifteen years ago, but it still enjoys brisk annual sales among American tourists heading for Spain. Hundreds of them carry it with them like a guidebook, and look at the country through Michener's eyes. I know, because I saw them doing so—on the plane, at cafés, beside the swimming pool. I know, because I did so myself. But Michener wrote about a very different Spain from the one I saw.

SOME THINGS, of course, haven't changed. Michener leads off his chapter on bullfights with an argument between your quintessential American and Spaniard about brutal sports—which the Spaniard wins by pointing out that more young men get killed and maimed every year playing American football than in the bullring. Michener goes on to explain the ritual of the fight and the drama and beauty that the match-up of a great bull and brave, skilled toreros can offer. Well, I'd read that stuff before I arrived at Madrid's *Plaza de Torros* to watch my first fight—actually, a day's program calls for six bullfights—but I wasn't persuaded. The point Michener seemed to miss was that every one of the Washington Redskins is on the field voluntarily and is getting pretty well paid for the risk he is running. Bullfighters are well paid, too, but for the bulls the work is involuntary, and unremunerative in the extreme. What's worse, this is a blood sport which people attend for the purpose of seeing an animal tortured to death. Bearbaiting is everywhere illegal. Cockfighting is abhorred by all civilized people. Bullfighting is neither, but despite its obvious aesthetic qualities it is surely dehumanizing for the people who watch it. One has to wonder about a country in which this is the national sport.

IF YOU CAN get past an initial fight such as I saw—in which the bull could barely stand after the first blood was drawn and the crowd was screaming for him to be put away fast, which he was—and if you can see a reasonably well-executed fight, something happens. You stop worrying so much about the bull—which *is* a huge and menacing beast—and start worrying about the picador's horse, which gets rammed at full force two or three times while the rider puts his lance into the bull. This doesn't change the moral equation, but at least it gives you somebody to root for. The horses are padded, but you're terrified that a horn might get under the pads. This didn't happen, thank God. So I stayed and saw six bulls killed—only one with a clean-to-the-heart coup de grace, the rest with a knife or sword to the spinal cord. I found I was able to watch it. I even yelled "*¡Olé!*" with the rest of the crowd. But that's it. Michener says that if you sit through two hundred fifty of these things, as he had by 1967, you'll see the one perfect one that dazzles you. No thanks. I'll stick to football.

BULLFIGHTING IS elementally Spanish, in keeping with the bloodshed, swordplay, and rigid ritualism of the country's history. The great mystery of Spain's history, to Michener, is why in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it almost simultaneously expanded, discovering and conquering the New World, and contracted, expelling Jews and Moslems and instituting an Inquisition that set Spaniard against Spaniard in a fanatic, brutal quest for racial and religious purity. Ultimately, Spain became isolated from the rest of the world for most of three centuries, except during the torment of various wars and civil wars. The last such orgy occurred between 1936 and 1939, with the Soviet Union aiding and trying to dominate the Republic, and Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy backing the victorious Franco (while the democracies declared neutrality). A million Spaniards were killed. Franco resumed Spain's isolation, keeping it neutral in World War II and afterward establishing a protected, planned, and self-contained fascist economy. He represented tradition, the Church, authoritarianism, and rigid mores. But he couldn't live forever.

MICHENER WROTE his book as Franco's rule was coming to an end, and he half laments some of the changes—the increase in Madrid's traffic congestion, the unavailability of hotel rooms, the deterioration of flamenco into burlesque, the Europeanization of sexual morality under the influence of the Suecas—the blond, easy Swedish girls who flocked to Spain's Mediterranean beaches in the 1960s. So far as I could tell, all of these trends have continued since Franco's death—most lamentably, the decline of flamenco, which still can be seen in its proud and classic form in Seville, but has turned into a slovenly gypsy show even at some of the supposed "best places" in Madrid. Sexually, Spain makes America seem prudish. One rarely sees women go topless at a family beach in the States; in Spain, it's not unusual at all.

WHAT MICHENER couldn't know was what would happen after Franco. But a frequent theme sounded by his Spanish friends, to which he seemed to give some credence, was that Spaniards are by nature "ungovernable," and require authoritarianism to keep them in line. He cites three different sources as saying, "It's a sad fact that during the nineteenth century no Spanish-speaking country on earth learned how to govern itself effectively by a system of ballots. We're a people of such mercurial temperament that the two-party system is quite beyond our capacity to handle. Spanish countries require a one-party state, like Mexico's." Michener's signal mistake was his evaluation of Franco's royal favorite, Prince (now King) Juan Carlos, as "weak-willed." In fact, Juan Carlos has proved to be a bulwark, and a democrat as well. In 1981, when military right-wingers seized the parliament building and tried to stage a coup, it was Juan Carlos who put a stop to the threat. There is right-wing muttering in Spain, over the legalization of abortion, the relaxation of "standards," and proposed transfers of funding from Catholic to public schools, but Spain seems to have passed decisively from a right-wing dictatorship to a democracy. Democratic voting has even brought to power the formerly illegal Socialist Party, albeit under the anti-Marxist moderate, Felipe González. So Spanish-speaking countries can be democratic. Perhaps Spain itself can be a model to save others.

M.M.K.

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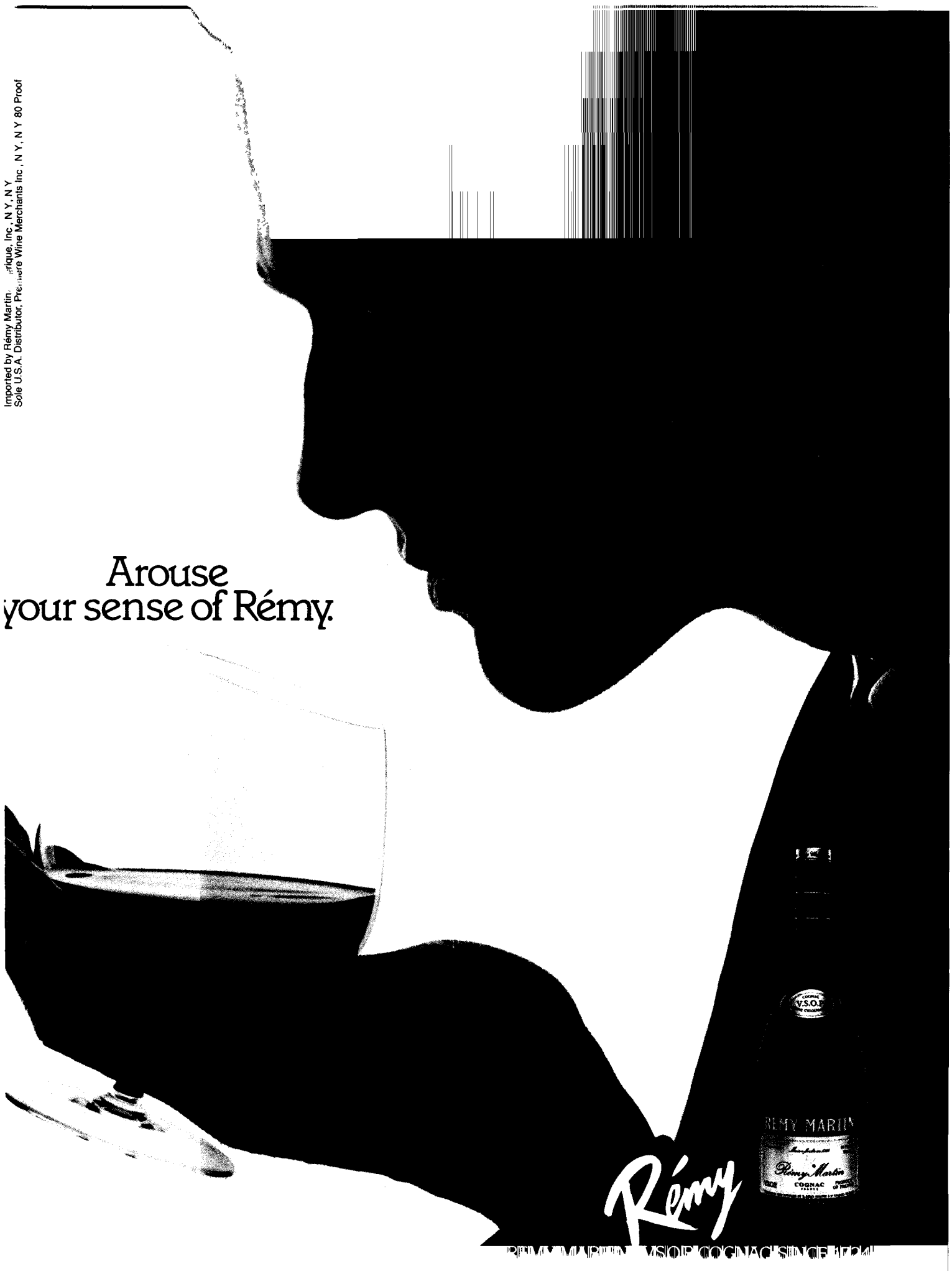

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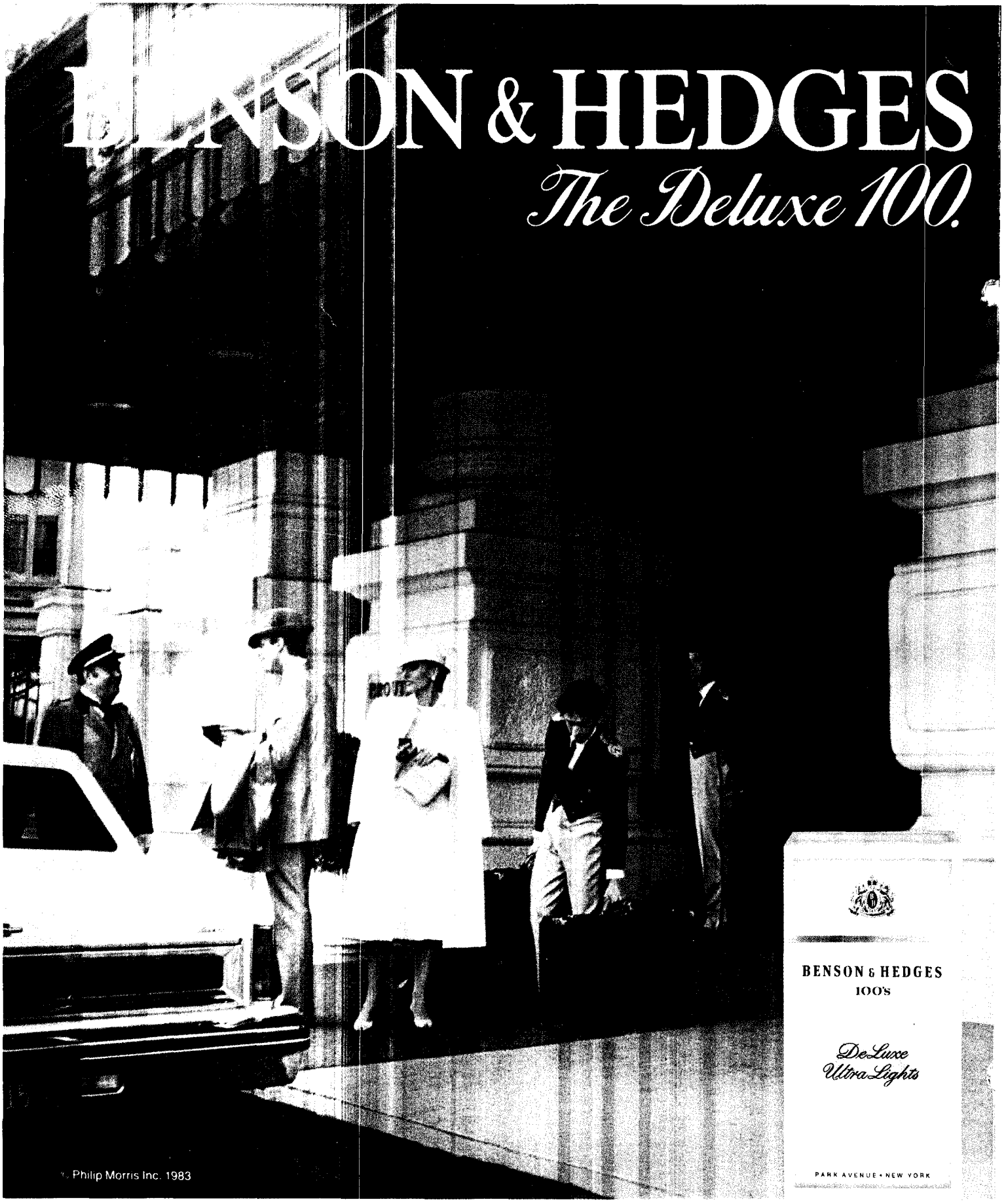

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